Islamic Philosophy of Religion

SYNTHESIS OF SCIENCE RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

JAFERHUSEIN I. LALIWALA

Dr. Jaferhusein I. Laliwala was the Reader in Economics in the Postgraduate Department of Economics in the University School of Social Sciences, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad. A number of students did their Ph. D. Studies in Economics under his guidance.

He has written a number of books on the different subjects of Economics, Philosophy and Religion. His many articles on Economics, Politics, Philosophy, Psychology and Education have been published in reputed journals and newspapers. He writes in English, Gujarati and Arabic Languages though he also now plans to write in Persian, Urdu and Hindi Languages.

He taught Islamic Economics to the postgraduate students in the Shariah Department of the Yarmouk University at Irbid, and also taught modern Economics in the Al al Bayat University at Mafraq in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. He has participated in many international seminars and conferences held on different subjects of Economics in Germany, U.S.A., Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iran etc.

His father was with Mahatma Gandhi and studied in Gujarat Vidyapith. Dr. Laliwala has been in the Mahatma Phule-Ambedkar Movement. He has been a strong believer in communal harmony, composite culture, human brotherhood, freedom, social justice, non-violence and peace.

ISBN-81-7625-476-2
2005, Size-Demy

Islamic Philosophy of Religion

Islamic Philosophy of Religion

Synthesis of Science Religion and Philosophy

Jaferhusein I. Laliwala

Sarup & Sons
New Delhi—110 002

Preface

The modern world is materially and spiritually different in many respects from the old world. The modern world is not only materially and technologically different, but there is basic change in the economic, political and social structures under the impact of the ideas and values of freedom, equality and humanism to which Islam has contributed immensely in the past. The Qur'an emphasised the importance of Reason and thinking and pondering over Nature, society, Man's own self and on History. The main contributions of the Muslims under the impact of the teachings of Qur'an have been described, by some prominent western scholars as (1) experimental science, (2) rationalist philosophy, (3) social welfare and (4) the positive attitude towards life.

But when it comes to the question of relationship between Reason and Revelation, the relationship between the scientific method (which is democratic and non-authoritarian) that is followed in the schools, colleges and universities, and a different method which is followed in religious schools, also when it relates to the secular nature of the modern state and the insistence on Democracy and equal fundamental rights of the individual and the inter-relationship between ethics, psychology, religion and philosophy, very few Muslim thinkers in the previous century and the present century have tried to grapple with these basic problems in the light of modern scientific and democratic ideas and in the perspective and framework

provided by the Qur'an which is again to be applied to modern Man and his society.

In this book, I have humbly tried to deal with these problems in an objective manner and without any subjective bias and in the light of the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith and the vast and fast developing knowledge in the fields of natural sciences, social sciences, psychology and psycho-analysis and philosophy.

Also, much misunderstanding prevails about the nature and role of Islamic Sufism. So here an effort is also made to lay bare the true meaning of Sufism and the role that it can play in the present day scientific world.

Recently I came across two excellent books — (1) one written by Prof. Mahmoud Ayoub on *Islam and the Third Universal Theory: The Religious Thought of Muammer al-Qadhdhafi* and (2) the second one — the collection of lectures delivered by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Seyyed Mohammad Khatami and published under the title *Islam, Dialogue and Civil Society* by Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, whose preface has been written by the Ex-Prime Minister of India, Mr. I. K. Gujaral. I delayed the publication of the book in order to write the gist of these two books and to include it in this book, as, the spirit of their message is on the same lines and it has been described and explained in a better way than what has been attempted in this book. The first 9 chapters were written in the year 1997 and 10th and 11th in 2004.

It may become evident from the persual of the thesis that I have been much influenced by the writings of Dr. Muhammed Iqbal, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Muhammad Ali, Khwaja Kamaluddin, Shri Kishorlal Mashruwala, M.N. Roy, Bertrand Russell, Karen Horney, Alfred Adler, Sigmund Freud, Erich Fromm, Franz Alexander, Mac Iver, Prof. B. R. Shenoy, Prof. F. A. Hayek, Prof. Milton Friedman, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Prof. Amartya K. Sen etc.

I thank very much Prof. Dr. J. A. Yagnik, Ex-Director of the School of Philosophy, Psychology and Education, and the Ex-Head of the Department of Philosophy, Gujarat

University for making very useful general suggestions. I am much indebted to him.

I am much thankful to Prof. S. A. Ali, the scholar of Islam of international repute and Ex-Director of Indian Institute of Islamic Studies (now Hamdard University 1989), for writing an excellent Foreword for this book. He is a fine thinker and a great scholar of the Comparative Study of the Major Religions of the world.

It is also a matter of great pleasure to lay on record that I was much benefited by my discussions with my younger brother, late Prof. Ahmedhusein Ismailbhai Laliwala. He had a deep insight in the understanding of human mind. His sudden death has been a great loss to me. It is also a matter of great pleasure to thank Prof. B. M. Peerzada who is a very sharp intellectual and a first rate thinker of a very high order. My discussions with him have always proved to be very fruitful for me. Though on some vital points, we agree to disagree.

My wife Shirin Laliwala helped me a lot by her patience and providing me all facilities for doing my academic work with ease. I am delighted to thank her, but feel bereaved and sad by her sudden death.

My son Zahid J. Laliwala and my daughter Mrs. Jahan Ara (Nasira) Mohsin Laliwala made some good suggestions for better presentation of the thesis of the book for which I feel much thankful to them.

My debt to my parents is immense and it cannot be described fully in words and so I dedicate this book to my dear and respected parents—Shrimati Chandbai Ismailbhai Laliwala and Shri Ismailbhai Rajjabbhai Laliwala.

I have to offer special thanks to Mr M. Fakhrul Hasan of Barabanki, who was Proof Reader with *The Statesman*, New Delhi, and is now with Hamdard University Press, for checking and rechecking the proofs improving the format.

I also appreciate the efforts of Mr Syed Zabiullah Hussaini of Warangal, India, now with Hamdard University, in resetting parts of the typescript.

Foreword

Prof. Jaferhusein Laliwala rides three horses at once: Economics, Islamics and Philosophy. The first is his profession, the second is his religion and the third his passion. The present book is a bold study in which he brings philosophy to bear on religious issues.

Prof. Laliwala, a scholar, endeavouring the integration of science Philosophy and Religion reminds us of the spectacular contribution of the Isma'ilis to philosophical thought until al-Ghazali (d. A.D. 1111) discredited philosophers through his famous work, *Tahafut al-falasifa*. Why he did so, being himself a great philosopher and greatly influenced by the previous generations of philosophers including Ibn Sina (A.D. 980-1037), may only be conjectured. A possible reason could have been the overshadowing of the simple, basic teachings of Islam by complicated philosophical discourses. One of the major issues of contention was the Avicennan thought of coeternity of matter with God. Those subscribing to this view were considered apostates and persecuted by the rulers. It was a damper on the pursuit of philosophy. However, speculative theology did not quite come to an end in the Arab heartland, as the recent discovery of philosophical texts from that period show. On the periphery of the Arab world, like Spain, Iran and India, philosophy flourished in all its grandeur. Long after the death of al-Ghazali, Muslim philosophers in Spain, like Ibn Ruhd (A.D. 1126-1198) and Muhyi al-Din Ibn al-'Arabi (A.D. 1165-1240), were producing important philosophical works that had wide impact. Mixing religion

and philosophy gave birth to a new *genre* of philosophy which we call *tasawwuf* or mystical philosophy. Such a mystical doctrine, called *wahdat al-wujud*, was evolved by Ibn al-'Arabi which was hotly debated. In the *madrasas* and in the *da'iras* of India — like the famous *Da'ira* of Shah Ajmal in Allahabad — Ibn 'Arabi's *Fusus al-hikam* was taught and discussed by eminent sufis and scholars, and commentaries were written in Arabic, Persian and Urdu down to our own times. A famous exponent of *wahdat al-wujud* was Shah Muhibballah of Allahabad (d. A.D. 1648) who wrote a *Sharh* (Commentary) of *Fusus al-hikam* and several *Rasa'il* (Treatises) on the doctrine in Arabic and Persian. The last commentary in Delhi was written in Urdu in the middle of the 20th century by the late Abdus Salam Niyazi, a mystic and a philosopher well versed in the Hellenistic tradition. But whereas a large number of scholars and mystics approved of the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud*, it had its detractors, one of whom was Mujaddid-i Alf-i Thani (d. A.D. 1624) who lived in North India and developed contra *wahdat al-wujud* the doctrine called *wahdat al-shuhud*, leading to a split among the sufis, one School favouring Ibn 'Arabi, and the other the Mujaddid. It was Shah Waliullah (d. A.D. 1762) who brought about re-conciliation between the two doctrines and the two Schools, pointed out that they were two sides of the same coin, and the difference lay in nomenclature.

In Iran, a hundred years after the death of al-Ghazali, who was born in Tus, Nasir al-Din Tusi was born — also in Tus. The philosophical tradition continued and in A.D. 1571 Shiraz saw the birth of one of the most influential philosophers, Mulla Sadra, a brilliant representative of the *Ishraqi* School or the School of Illumination.

Philosophy has survived, and will survive, unless the human mind becomes sterile. It should be clearly noted that there are various forms of knowing. The ordinary people will take things at their face value. This is knowledge at the surface. The inquisitive person will penetrate the surface, dissect and analyse the contents and become a scientist. A more inquisitive man will try to find the nature, purpose, design, value, meaning and goal and become a philosopher. Such scientific and philosophical knowledge

does not run counter to the religious teachings, but may actually support them. The philosophers of Frankfurt School or the philosophers in the Catholic Centres like Gregorian University and the University of Notre Dame have produced many profound works on philosophical interpretations of religious issues, like the nature of the divine, the purpose of creation, the meaning of man, his fate and final destination, but these thinkers did not discard their religion. The fear in the Muslim world that philosophy will lead the people away from religion is unfounded. In fact, the Qur'an appeals to the exercise of *'aql* and *fikr* (reasoning and thinking) at various places. These fine instruments of the human mind open up a new vista of reality, but they have to be used carefully only by, to use the words of the Qur'an, '*al-rasikhun fi'l-'Ilm*' (those well-grounded in knowledge). Among the important works on the subject is Rosalind Ward Gwynne's *Logic, Rhetoric and Legal Reasoning in the Qur'an: God's Arguments* (2004). Prof. Laliwala shows how philosophy helps to weed out inconsistencies.

The only way to assess a thing is to assess it in the totality of knowledge. This is the basic rule of epistemology. Any deeper understanding of the Qur'an requires an integration of the sources of knowledge. Prof. Laliwala's approach is commendable as he does exactly that.

Here is a book which lifts the reader from the level of the common man to the level where the deeper meaning of Islam begins to unfold. The reader will be enriched from Prof. Laliwala's scholarly discussion of many Islamic themes, like the types of revelation, stages of sufism, the nature of our experience, knowledge, moral values and spiritual progress.

At a time when the Western media has created many misunderstandings about Islam, this book must circulate freely and bring enlightenment to those who lack it.

S. A. Ali
Former Director
Indian Institute of Islamic Studies
New Delhi

30 June 2005

Contents

To my parents
who gave me a new vision of life.

1

Definition and Meaning of the Islamic Philosophy of Religion

Difference between Islamic Philosophy and Muslim Philosophy

There is a difference between Islamic Philosophy and Muslim Philosophy. Muslim Philosophy should mean philosophies as entertained and developed by Muslims while Islamic Philosophy should mean philosophy as emanating or derived from the Qur'an and Hadith where help can be taken from the similar philosophical efforts. But it has so happened generally that all the philosophies (perhaps barring the philosophies of open atheism) as developed by Muslims were described and designated as Islamic Philosophy. So whenever we come across any book on the history of philosophy (including philosophies of atheism) as developed or entertained by Muslims, that book is described or entitled as the book on the History of Islamic Philosophy. As for example, take the case of a book on *The History of Islamic Philosophy* written by Prof. Majid Fakhri of Lebanon or a book on *The Classical Islamic Philosophy* by Taufic Ibrahim and Arthur Sagdeev of Russia and other such prominent books on the subject, the meaning of the titles of which is clearly pertaining to the philosophies as entertained and developed by Muslims though the second book in particular includes even the discussions of three

atheistic philosophies as developed by Muslims. But still we observe that barring some exceptions, Muslim philosophers have generally tried to synthesise science, religion and philosophy and endeavoured to define their subject-matters in such a fashion that they are found to be complementary to one another rather than coming in conflict with one another. It was perhaps specially on account of this reason that Muslim philosophy was known as Islamic philosophy.

Meaning of Islamic Philosophy

Here in this book, by the phrase 'Islamic Philosophy of Religion', I mean the approach of the Qur'an and Hadith towards Religion, and the philosophy emanating from this approach and also how it was viewed by Muslim philosophers and Islamic philosophers. In fact, as I understand Islam, it not only is Religion, but it also contains a Philosophy of its own and it has got a scientific, democratic and non-authoritarian attitude in finding or understanding truth and discovering moral values and it stands for universal humanism, personality development and the regeneration of society on the basis of social justice, human brotherhood, peace and equal fundamental rights for all human beings as human beings.

Once when I mentioned the phrase 'Islamic Philosophy' to one of my non-Muslim friends, he was surprised to hear that there can be anything like Islamic philosophy and he told me that it is a contradiction in terms and Islam cannot have any philosophy. I was amused and shocked to hear this, as this was completely contrary to facts and history, as in Islamic philosophy, we find the wonderful synthesis of Greek, Indian, Iranian and Muslim philosophy. Not only many non-Muslim brethren, but many Muslim brethren also are unaware of the true Islamic philosophy of religion and the great contributions of Muslim Philosophers towards philosophy in general and Islamic philosophy in particular. So I decided to clarify the approach of the Qur'an and Hadith towards Religion and also to highlight the contributions of Muslim philosophers towards the philosophy of Religion in general and towards that of Islam in particular.

Islam is Not Mohammedanism

It should also be clarified here that Islam is not Mohammedanism, as the word Mohammedanism does not occur either in the Qur'an or in Hadith and it has been completely unknown to its followers and so it never occurs in the writings of the Muslim scholars of the past. But as the Westerners gave this name 'Mohammedanism', to the religion followed by Muslims, some Muslim writers of the present era also used the word Mohammedanism, particularly in the books of Law, only for the ease of discussion, though they were quite aware that it was a misnomer and the name of the religion followed by Muslims was Islam and not Mohammedanism. The Qur'an mentions it as Islam and Prophet Muhammed himself is described as a Muslim and all the prophets before him like Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Ismael, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Solomon, David, Jesus and other prophets who appeared in different parts of the world, are described as Muslims in the Qur'an. In Qur'an, it is said: "This day, I have perfected for you your religion and completed my favour on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion."[1]

Also 'He named you Muslims before and in this.'[2]

Then prophet Muhammad is again described as a Muslim in the Qur'an with the following words where he is made to say 'I am the first of the Muslims.'[3]

(For further discussion, please refer to Maulana Muhammad Ali's book *Religion of Islam*).[4]

Etymological Meaning of Islam and Muslim

The word 'Islam' is used here in the sense of *Din* (Religion) and not *Shari'a*. In the Qur'an, it is said that the sun and the moon and the stars all follow the laws of God and do not move even an inch from the paths or the routes prescribed for them by God. Thus they submit to God and follow Islam. It is in this general sense that the word 'Islam' has been used in the Qur'an and not in any other sense.

The etymological meaning of the word 'Islam' is 'to enter

into peace' and that of the word 'Muslim' is 'One who makes his peace with God and Man'. One can make peace with God by submission to the moral laws of God which express the attributes of God and can make peace with man by not only refraining from doing harm to other human beings but actually doing good to them. In the Qur'an, it is clearly stated: "Whoever submits (*aslama*) himself entirely to Allah and he is the doer of good to others, he has his reward from his Lord and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve."[5]

Now, in order to understand the nature of the subject 'Islamic Philosophy of Religion', initially we should have some bare idea of Philosophy of Religion in general.

Philosophy of Religion

In philosophy as such, we discuss the efforts for the synthesis of all knowledge as provided by different sciences like Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Psychology, Anthropology, Geology, History, Social Sciences etc. and try to take an integrated view of the universe and the place of Man in it besides studying Metaphysics and Epistemology and taking their help in evolving such an integrated view. Just as science is based on experience (experiments and observation), in the same way, Religion is also based on a sort of spiritual experience and all knowledge is thus based on experience which gets systematised with the help of intellect and then it becomes reason. Philosophy is an intellectual pursuit working with a religious seal to weed out impurities that might have possibly crept in scientific experience and religious experience so that pure experience and consequently pure truth can be attained. But what do we exactly mean by Philosophy of Religion?

Four Definitions of the Philosophy of Religion

In this respect, we take into account four definitions of the Philosophy of Religion as given by Prof. Pringle Pattison, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Erich Fromm and Dr. Muhammad Iqbal in some detail so that the problems involved in the subject may become clear in the very beginning.

Prof. Pringle Pattison's Philosophy of Religion

Prof. Pringle Pattison observes the following in his book *The Philosophy of Religion* as regards the meaning of the philosophy of Religion:

'A few words may be useful at the outset as an indication of what we commonly mean by the Philosophy of Religion. Philosophy was described long ago by Plato as the synoptic view of things. That is to say, it is the attempt to see things together — to keep all the main features of the world in view, and to grasp them in their relation to one another as parts of one whole. Only thus can we acquire a sense of proportion and estimate aright the significance of any particular range of facts for our ultimate conclusions about the nature of the world-process and the world around. Accordingly, the philosophy of any particular department of experience, the Philosophy of Religion, the Philosophy of Art, the Philosophy of Law, is to be taken as meaning an analysis and interpretation of the experience in question in its bearing upon our view of man and the world in which he lives. And when the facts upon which we concentrate are so universal, and in their nature so remarkable, as those disclosed by the history of religion — the philosophy of man's religious experience — cannot but exercise a determining influence upon our general philosophical conclusions. In fact with many writers the particular discussion tends to merge in the more general.'[6]

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Philosophy of Religion

This subject is made much more clear by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in the following words:

'Unfortunately the question does not appear to have been tackled although much has been written on the Philosophy of Religion and certainly no method has been found for satisfactorily dealing with the problem. One is left to one's own method for determining the issue. As for myself I think it is safe to proceed on the view that to know the philosophy of any movement or any institution, one must study the revolutions which the movement or the institution has undergone. Revolution is the mother

of philosophy and if it is not the mother of philosophy, it is a lamp which illuminates philosophy. Religion is no exception to this rule. To me, therefore, it seems quite evident that the best method of ascertaining the criterion by which to judge the Philosophy of Religion is to study the Revolutions which religion has undergone. That is the method which I propose to adopt.'

Two Religious Revolutions

"There have thus been two Religious Revolutions. One was an External Revolution. The other was an internal Revolution. The External Revolution was concerned with the field within which the authority of Religion was to prevail. The Internal Revolution had to do with the changes in Religion as a scheme of divine governance for human society. The External Revolution was not really a Religious Revolution at all. It was a revolt of science against the extra territorial jurisdiction assumed by Religion over a field which did not belong [to it]. The Internal Revolution was a real Revolution or may be compared to any other political Revolution, such as the French Revolution or the Russian Revolution. It involved a constitutional change. By this Revolution, the scheme of divine governance came to be altered, amended and reconstituted."

'How profound have been the changes which this internal Revolution has made in the antique scheme of divine governance can be easily seen. By this Revolution, God has ceased to be a member of a community. Thereby he has become impartial. God has ceased to be the Father of Man in the physical sense of the word. He has become the Creator of the universe. The breaking of this blood-bond has made it possible to hold that God is good. By this Revolution man has ceased to be a blind worshipper of God doing nothing but obeying his commands. Thereby man has become a responsible person required to justify his belief in God's commandments by his conviction. By this Revolution God has ceased to be merely the protector of society; and social interests, in gross, have ceased to be the centre of the divine order. Society and man have

changed places as centres of this divine order. It is man who has become the centre of it.

'All this analysis of the Revolution in the Ruling concepts of Religion as a scheme of divine governance had one purpose, namely, to discover the norm for evaluating the philosophy of a Religion. The impatient reader may not ask where are these norms and what are they? The reader may not have found the norms specified by their names in the foregoing discussion. But he could not have failed to notice that the whole of this Religious Revolution was raging around the norms for judging what is right and what is wrong. If he has not, let me make explicit what has been implicit in the whole of this discussion. We began with the distinction between antique society and modern society, as it has been pointed out they differed in the type of divine governance they accepted as their Religious ideals. At one end of the Revolution was the antique society with its Religious ideal in which the end was Society. At the other end of the Revolution is the modern Society with its Religious ideal in which the end is the individual. To put the same fact in terms of the norm, it can be said that the norm or the criterion, for judging right and wrong in the Antique Society was utility while the norm or the criterion for judging right and wrong in the Modern Society is justice. The Religious Revolution was not thus a revolution in the religious organisation of Society resulting in the shifting of the centre from society to the individual [only] — it was a revolution in the norms [also].*

'Some may demur to the norms I have suggested. It may be that it is a new way of reaching them. But to my mind, there is no doubt that they are the real norms by which to judge the philosophy of religion. In the first place, the norm must enable people to judge what is right and wrong in the conduct of men. In the second place the norm must be appropriate to current notion of what constitutes the moral good. From both these points of view, they appear to be the true norms. They enable us to judge what is

---

* Words in square brackets are added by the writer in order to avoid possible misunderstanding and clarify Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's approach better.

right and wrong. They are appropriate to the society which adopted them. Utility as a criterion was appropriate to the antique world in which society being the end, the moral good was held to be something which had social utility. Justice as a criterion became appropriate to the Modern World in which individual being the end, the moral good was held to be something which does justice to the individual. There may be controversy as to which of the two norms is morally superior. But I do not think there can be any serious controversy that these are not the norms. If it is said that these norms are not transcendental enough; my reply is that if a norm whereby one is to judge the philosophy of religion must be Godly, it must also be earthly.'[7]

Erich Fromm's Philosophy of Religion

Now Erich Fromm also tries to give a comprehensive view of the subject in his book *Psychoanalysis and Religion* with the following words:

'Any discussion of religion is handicapped by a serious terminological difficulty. While we know that there were and are many religions outside of monotheism, we nevertheless associate the concept religion with a system centered around God and supernatural forces; we tend to consider monotheistic religion as a frame of reference for understanding and evaluating of all other religions. It thus becomes doubtful whether religions without God like Buddhism, Taoism, or Confucianism can be properly called religions. Such secular systems as contemporary authoritarianisms (like communism, fascism, nazism etc.) are not called religions at all, although psychologically speaking they deserve this name. We simply have no word to denote religion as a general human phenomenon in such a way that some association with a specific type of religion does not creep in and colour the concept. For lack of such a word, I shall use the term religion in these chapters, but I want to make it clear at the outset that *I understand by religion any system of thought and action shared by a group which gives the individual a frame or orientation and an object of devotion.*

'There is indeed no culture of the past, and it seems there can be no culture in the future, which does not have religion in this broad sense of our definition.

'We need not, however, stop at this merely descriptive statement. The study of man permits us to recognise that the need for a common system of orientation and for an object of devotion is deeply rooted in the conditions of human existence.'[8]

I believe that all these three views are complementary to one another and not alternative ones and hence they should be comprehended together as supplementing one another and not supplanting each other.

Philosophy of Religion as Viewed by Dr. Muhammad Iqbal In the Islamic Perspective

Now let us take into account Dr. Muhammad Iqbal's views on the validity and the cognitive aspect of religious experience which clarifies philosophy of religion in general and its Islamic version in particular. In his well-known book, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, he wrote:

'Now, since the transformation and guidance of man's inner and outer life is the essential aim of religion, it is obvious that the general truths which it embodies must not remain unsettled. No one would hazard action on the basis of a doubtful principle of conduct. Indeed, in view of its function, religion stands in greater need of a rational foundation of its ultimate principles than even the dogmas of science. Science may ignore a rational metaphysics; indeed, it has ignored it so far. Religion can hardly afford to ignore the search for a reconciliation of the oppositions of experience and a justification of the environment in which humanity finds itself. That is why Professor Whitehead has acutely remarked that 'the ages of faith are the ages of rationalism'. But to rationalise faith is not to admit the superiority of philosophy over religion. Philosophy, no doubt, has jurisdiction to judge religion, but what is to be judged is of such a nature that it will not submit to the jurisdiction of philosophy except on its own terms.

While sitting in judgment on religion, philosophy cannot give religion an inferior place among its data. Religion is not a departmental affair; it is neither mere thought, not mere feeling, nor mere action; it is an expression of the whole man. Thus, in the evaluation of religion, philosophy must recognise the central position of religion and has no other alternative but to admit it as something focal in the process of reflective synthesis. Nor is there any reason to suppose that thought and intuition are essentially opposed to each other. They spring up from the same root and complement each other. The one grasps Reality piecemeal, the other grasps it in its wholeness. The one fixes its gase on the external, the other on the temporal aspect of Reality. The one is present enjoyment of the whole of Reality; the other aims at traversing the whole by slowly specifying and closing up the various regions of the whole for exclusive observation. Both are in need of each other for mutual divination. Both seek visions of the same Reality which reveals itself to them in accordance with their function in life. In fact, intuition, as Bergson rightly says, is only a higher kind of intellect.

'The search for rational foundations in Islam may be regarded to have begun with the Prophet himself. His constant prayer was: 'God! Grant me knowledge of the ultimate nature of things!' The work of later mystics and non-mystic rationalists forms an exceedingly instructive chapter in the history of our culture, inasmuch as it reveals a longing for a coherent system of ideas, a spirit of whole-hearted devotion to truth, as well as the limitations of the age, which rendered the various theological movements in Islam less fruitful than they might have been in a different age. As we all know, Greek philosophy has been a great cultural force in the history of Islam, yet a careful study of the Qur'an and the various schools of scholastic theology that arose under the inspiration of Greek thought, disclose the remarkable fact that while Greek philosophy very much broadened the outlook of Muslim thinkers, it, on the whole, obscured their vision of the Qur'an. Socrates concentrated his attention on the human world alone. To him the proper study of man was man and not the world of plants, insects

and stars. How unlike the spirit of the Qur'an, which sees in the humble bee a recipient of Divine inspiration and constantly calls upon the reader to observe the perpetual change of the winds, the alternation of day and night, the clouds, the starry heavens and the planets swimming through infinite space! As a true disciple of Socrates, Plato despised sense perception which, in his view, yielded mere opinion and no real knowledge. How unlike the Qur'an, which regards 'hearing' and 'sight' as the most valuable Divine gifts and declares them to be accountable to God for their activity in this world. This is what the earlier Muslim students of the Qur'an completely missed under the spell of classical speculation. They read the Qur'an in the light of Greek thought. It took them over 200 years to perceive — though not quite clearly — that the spirit of the Qur'an was essentially anticlassical, and the result of this perception was a kind of intellectual revolt, the full significance of which has not been realised even up to the present day.'[9]

Classical Islamic Philosophy

Here I would also like to quote from the Epilogue of a brilliant book *Classical Islamic Philosophy* about the contributions of the Muslim philosophers and scientists to the philosophical and scientific development of Europe in the past which would be quite relevant to the discussion here. The learned authors have aptly written the following:

'The influence of the ideas of Ibn Sina, Ibn 'Arabi', Suhrawardi, Ghazali (thinkers who incorporated the principles of *falsafa* and *kalam* in their views) on the intellectual life of the Moslem world is traceable to one extent or another right down to the twentieth century.

'Classical Islamic philosophy had a considerable influence on the development of the philosophical thought of Europe. In the twelfth century in Toledo, on the initiative of the local archbishop, the great chancellor of Castille, Raimundo Lulio, a school of translators was founded that did much to acquaint the Christian world with the antique and Moslem philosophical legacy preserved in Arabic. Two other

centres of translation of philosophical and scientific literature from Arabic into Latin were Burgos and Sicily.

'Several features can be noted in the work of these translation centres, reminiscent of the translation movement in the Baghdad caliphate. In both, intermediaries were often involved in translation, in Toledo, Jewish scholars and in the East, Syrian Nestorians. And in both areas there was a selective approach to the spiritual legacy of predecessors, rejecting everything foreign and specific, and preserving the universal and human. Of the three main trends of Islamic philosophy, Sufism had the greatest significance for the development of European philosophical thought. Its relation to western non-Islamic literature can be seen more on the plane of typological similarity than from the angle of influence and borrowings.

'From the science of *kalam*, atomistic ideas attracted the closest attention of Christian Europe; although some thinkers (Thomas Aquinas, for example) rejected them, they encouraged a rebirth of Europeans' interest on the whole in atomistics. The *mutakallims* developed several ideas that Greek scholars had only approached and which had not been formulated and clearly expressed by them. These included the differentiation of 'extension' in general and 'corporeality', 'position' and 'place', physical and mathematical divisibility, physical and mathematical minima (atom and point). These ideas, precisely of the *mutakallims*, were apparently directly or indirectly absorbed by the natural philosophers of the Renaissance. The Greek conception of 'pause', which explained the difference in the velocities of moving bodies by a greater or lesser number of 'stops', also passed to the atomists of modern times via the science of *kalam*. It was not by chance that certain European finitists numbered *mutakallims* first in the list of their teachers and predecessors.

"Falsafa in the persons of the Islamic Aristotelians had the greatest influence on the thought of Europe. As Roger Bacon (d. 1292) had remarked, it was thanks to Moslem commentators that Aristotle's philosophy, previously lost in oblivion, became known in Latin. Original works of the

falasifa left a profound mark on the philosophy of the European Middle Ages and Renaissance. The medieval European bookmen were familiar with the works of Kindi and Farabi, and Ghazali's *Maqasid al-falasifa* (he was seen as one of the main representatives of the Aristotelian philosophy due to his short exposition of it). The philosophical works of Ibn Tufayl enjoyed wide popularity among European scholars, especially after their Latin translation of 1671. But the deepest mark on Christian Europe was left by Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and Ibn Rushd (Averroes). Ibn Sina's philosophy attracted attention primarily through its Neoplatonic aspects. As a result there arose a current sometimes called 'Avicennising Augustinism'. In the thirteenth century Ibn Sina's influence is traceable in William of Avergne, in the French maitres of Paris University, in Alexander Halensis, Jean de La Rochelle, and Bonaventura (Giovanni Fidanza), and also in the English Fransiscans Robert Grosseteste and John Peckham. This influence reached its apogee in the philosophy of Roger Bacon, whose political ideas, in particular, reflected the view of Ibn Sina on the Caliphate. Traces of Avicenna's influence can also be found in the works of Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, and Duns Scotus.

The philosophy of Ibn Rushd (Averroes) was popular in Europe in the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries and underlay Averroism, the trend in medieval West European Philosophy called after him. His main followers in Paris University in the thirteenth century were Siger de Brabant and Boethius of Dacia, and in the fourteenth century Jean Jeandin. In the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries the centres of Averroism were Bologna and Padua universities (Pietro d'Abano, Paolo Veneto, Goetano da Tiene). Ideas that arose in Ibn Rushd are traceable in the works of Pietro Pomponazzi, Porzio, Cremonini, Pico della "Mirandola, Giordano Bruno, and Vanini. Averroists developed the doctrine of their teacher about the birth of forms in the womb of matter. Asserting the universal causal link of phenomena (following Ibn Rushd), they saw in the regular motion of the heavenly bodies a manifestation of the natural necessity that governed everything happening in the sublunary world including the

changing of states and religious laws. Averroists rejected individual immortality, holding a conception of a single intellect common to mankind. When substantiating the autonomy of human reason and the independence of philosophical knowledge from theology, Ibn Rushd's European followers developed a doctrine of double truth, according to which tenets untrue from the standpoint of theology could be true from the standpoint of philosophy. The conception of the immortal human intellect put forward by him was associated in Europe for centuries, by Averroists (Dante, Herden), with the idea of a single humanity that was progressing in its intellectual and moral development.

'Classical Islamic philosophy on the whole promoted secularisation of Europe's philosophical thought, strengthened its ties with the natural sciences, and so prepared the shaping and development of the philosophy of modern times.'[10]

Reorientation of Islamic Thought and Philosophy

Now there is appearing life in the Muslim world which had become almost lifeless for the last five hundred years and it is now coming nearer to the West. This is not a bad sign, but a healthy sign. Let me again quote Dr. Iqbal in this respect:

'During the last five hundred years, religious thought in Islam has been practically stationary. There was a time when European thought received inspiration from the world of Islam. The most remarkable phenomenon of modern history, however, is the enormous rapidity with which the world of Islam is spiritually moving towards the West. There is nothing wrong in this movement, for European culture, on its intellectual side, is only of further development of some of the most important phases of the culture of Islam. Our only fear is that the dazzling exterior of European culture may arrest our movement and we may fail to reach the true inwardness of that culture. During all the centuries of our intellectual stupor, Europe has been seriously thinking on the great problems in which the philosophers and scientists of Islam were so keenly interested. Since the Middle Ages, when the schools of Muslim theology were

completed, infinite advance has taken place in the domain of human thought and experience. The extension of man's power over nature has given him a new faith and a fresh sense of superiority over the forces that constitute his environment. New points of view have been suggested, old problems have been re-stated in the light of fresh experience, and new problems have arisen. It seems as if the intellect of man is outgrowing its own most fundamental categories-time, space and causality. With the advance of scientific thought even our concept of intelligibility is undergoing a change. The theory of Einstein has brought a new vision of the universe and suggests new ways of looking at the problems common to both religion and philosophy. No wonder then that the younger generation of Islam in Asia and Africa demand a fresh orientation of their faith. With the reawakening of Islam, therefore, its is necessary to examine, in an independent spirit, what Europe has thought and how far the conclusions reached by her can help us in the revision and, if necessary, reconstruction, of theological thought in Islam'[11].

Integrated Approach

We may initiate the discussion with the approach as developed by Erich Fromm, tread along with that of Pringle Pattison, work with that of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and accept that one which contains the basic elements of all these approaches as well as something basically more as explained by Dr. Muhammad Iqbal. The spiritual and wholesome effect of this integrated approach will be seen spread over all the pages of this book. So I do not want to add anything by way of definition here, but the approach taken in this book and the consequent definition will become clear as the discussion proceeds. Hence the meaning of the Islamic Philosophy of Religion can be gathered and properly understood when one goes through almost all the pages of the book, it cannot be otherwise clarified fully in the very beginning.

References

1. Al-Qur'an (5:3)
2. *Ibid.*, (22:78)
3. *Ibid.*, (6: 164)
4. Muhammed Ali Maulana, *The Religion of Islam* (S. Chand & Co. (Pvt.) Ltd., Ram Nagar, New Delhi, India) pp. 1-3.
5. Al-Qur'an (2:112)
6. Pattison, Pringle, *The Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford) pp. 1-2.
7. Ambedkar, Babasaheb, *Writings and Speeches*, Volume-3 (Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, Bombay, India) pp. 8-10, 21-22.
8. Fromm, Erich, *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Yale University Press, Massachusetts, U.S.A., 1950) pp. 21-22.
9. Iqbal Mohummad, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Oriental Publishers and Distributors, Daryaganj, Delhi, India) pp. 2-4.
10. Ibrahim, Taufic, and Sagdeev, Arthur, *Classical Islamic Philosophy, Epilogue* (Arnold Publishers (India) Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, India) p. 347-350.
11. Iqbal, Muhammed *op. cit.*, pp. 7, 8.2

2

Science, Religion and Philosophy in Islam

Experience Intertwined with Intellect — the Source of Knowledge

The objectivity of all sciences lies in their base being universal experience combined with intellect as the organising element for this experience. In physical sciences including astronomy and biology alongwith physics and chemistry, experience is acquired through experiments in the laboratories and through observation with the help of microscope and telescope and other instruments. In psychology, personal experience of the individuals is important. Experiments on animals have not given much insight into the understanding of human mind and human personality as manifested in its various relations. Sigmund Freud started his career as a physiologist in order to understand human psychic abnormality, but soon he realised that where physiology ends, psychology begins. Human mind is different from human brain though closely associated with it and that is why he talked about the unconscious mind, Id, human ego and also the super ego. In social sciences also, universal human individual experience reveals universal human nature on the knowledge of which all-social sciences-economics, politics, sociology, social psychology and anthropology should be based and built.

Thus we see that in all sciences, natural and social, experience alongwith intellect as an organising principle of this experience, is considered to be the basis of knowledge of facts in all these fields of life. In natural sciences, this democratic and non-authoritarian method gives us Knowledge of the external world. In Religion also, spiritual experience with intellect as the organising principle of this experience is the basis of knowledge about absolute things of life like soul or self, God and life after death. Psychology being the science of self, it is closely related with mystical or spiritual experience of the individual.

Here, we should note one important point that intellect is not an alternative to scientific experience or spiritual experience. Experience (and not authority) is the basis of knowledge, but it does not become knowledge unless intellect organises this experience and then it takes the form of knowledge.

So, knowledge = experience + intellect which get organically related and not synthetically interwoven and not mechanically or externally related.

Logic is based on intellect, but it also starts with major and minor premises which are ultimately based on experience.

Philosophy Weeds out Impurities in Experience and Inconsistencies

Now scientific methods try to weed out impurities that may be there in scientific experience. But still there remain some impurities and, therefore, they are brought into the field of philosophy for weeding out impurities and for rectification of errors. The same should apply to spiritual, moral and religious experience which also gives us universal, moral and spiritual norms of human behaviour. So spiritual experience of sufis, saints and prophets also should be brought into the field of philosophy to be analysed by intellect so that we can understand and comprehend at least something of this pure experience. The ingredients of impurity that might have crept in would have got mixed up with this pure experience or in the understanding of

them by theologians and the people, they may be removed with the aid of intellect in philosophy. Intellect by itself is not the source of knowledge and therefore it is not an alternative to scientific or spiritual experience. So intellect does two functions — one is the function of organizing scientific or spiritual experience in the respective fields of science and religion, and the second function of intellect is to try for consistency between two or more facts given by scientific or spiritual experience and to try to weed out impurities (that might have got mixed up with these experiences) through the process of establishing consistency between facts. So facts of experience (scientific and spiritual) are accepted by intellect as given data and they are not challenged by it, but intellect tries to create consistency among these facts and tries to evolve a consistent and co-ordinated world-view based on facts of these experiences. This is the role of intellect in philosophy. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal has supported this role of philosophy even as regards spiritual and religious experience in his famous book *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam.* This is very necessary and it results into the Philosophy of Religion.

Kalam, Philosophy and Sufism — Ingredients of Islamic Philosophy

Now in order to understand the Islamic philosophy of Religion, understanding of Kalam, Philosophy and Sufism is necessary. Kalam and Philosophy both are Islamic philosophies i.e. philosophies evolved by Muslims and they are based on speculative reason and to some extent on scientific experience, but accepting revelation broadly as the authoritative source. But in Sufistic philosophy, we find the synthesis of science, religion and philosophy and showing some sort of revelationary experience and knowledge to be universal. We find the synthetic combination of *Kalam*, Islamic philosophy and Sufism in the philosophy of Sufism as developed by Ibn 'Arabi and Suhrawardi and other prominent Sufis. Sufism is known as *Tasawwuf* in Arabic language and now in English language also. Sufism has passed through two stages: the initial one that starts with the Companions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him),

which was mostly prephilosophical and set the stage of pure mysticism unaided by philosophy, and the second one was a philosophical stage wherein we find a philosophy of universalism based on universal, individual, and spiritual experience. The first stage continued up to the twelfth century and the second stage started taking shape in final decades of the twelfth century and flowered soon thereafter from the beginning of the thirteenth century.

Two Stages of Sufism

Let us first try to understand the first stage of the philosophical Sufism. This stage can be divided into four sub-stages, namely:

(1) Roots of Sufism are there in the ascetic aspect of the life of prophet Mohammed (peace be on him) and in the simple lives that the first-four caliphs led, but the method of ascetic sufism started taking some shape by taking leaf from the ascetic lives of some eminent companions of prophet Muhammed (peace be on him) like Abu Zar al-Ghfari (died in 652), Abu'l Darda 'Amir al-Ansari (died in 652) and Hudhayfa (died in 657). Then other pioneers of ascetic Sufism were Hasan al-Basri (died in 728), Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib (died in 712), Ibrahim Ibn Adham (died in 770) and al-Fadil ibn 'Ayad (died in 802).

(2) The sufi, in those days, was known as *Zahid* or *'Abid.* Sufis had a strong sense of religion and they led pure and simple lives remaining away from money and power which are, beyond a certain limit, corrupting forces. Money and power are good servants, but bad masters and hence they avoided them. Besides following *Shari'a* strictly, they used to do *dhikr*, i.e. remembering God continuously so that Satan may not creep in and misguide.

(3) Afterwards, *dhikr* got associated with some bodily movements. Then it started being performed with the beating of drums and other kinds of music.

(4) During the 8th, 9th and 10th centuries A.D., Khanqahs (like Ashrams or a kind of spiritual inns) developed,

in which there used to be a 'Shaikh' or 'Murshid' i.e. a teacher or Ustad and the students or followers studied there under his guidance and were called *Murids*. Man being a weak animal (as Qur'an also points out that Man is created weak), he or she requires a teacher who can guide to the right path (*Sirat al-Mustaqim*). It is rightly said that one who has no teacher, Satan is his mentor. It is difficult to be good, but easy to be bad. To climb up is difficult, but to come down is easy. So *Murshid* or a spiritual teacher is necessary for the guidance of every human being; without his matured help, man is likely to go astray. Mureed is expected to follow *Murshid* as he is instructed to do. *Murshid* who is a spiritual teacher is not the agent between murid and God, he simply shows and guides the student on the path leading to God-realisation and self-realisation. He himself teaches that there is no intermediary between man and God. One may pray to God (when one is alive in this world) for others, but to accept it or not, is God's prerogative. (The second stage is discussed in the 5th and the 6th chapters.)

Means and Sources of Knowledge according to the Qur'an

In Islam, conscious Faith is the result of knowledge and then it becomes the principle of action, and knowledge is based on experience, and intellect is the organiser of this experience so that it takes the form of knowledge. This knowledge may be about the external world of Man or it may be about the internal world of Man. In Islam, purpose of life is not merely to know something, but to become something with the help of this knowledge. As you become, so you know and as you know, so you become. Socrates rightly said that knowledge is virtue.

But what are the means and sources of knowledge according to the Qur'an? When we study the Qur'an, we find that it mentions eyes, ears, heart, i.e. human conscience and intellect as the means of acquiring knowledge. Then the Qur'an asks us to study Nature, History and one's

ownself to find the signs of the mercy and the providence of one God working in them. Thus, according to the Qur'an, the sources of knowledge are three — (1) Nature, (2) Man (including Man's Society) and (3) the History of Man.

Meaning of Human Conscience

When the Qur'an refers to human conscience, it means both intellect and intuition which get themselves combined and integrated in the form of Reason. Reason is not pure intellect, but it is intellect fructified with intuition. Intellect indicates the conceptual power of man while intuition is the direct rapport of human conscience with Reality. Intellect includes the power of intelligence also which implies the capacity to relate one thing to another. Thus actually Reason consists of Intellect, Intelligence and intuition. Of course, sometimes, this gives rise to semantic problems also. Now, the use of reason is called thinking. So on almost every alternate page, the Qur'an asks us to see, to hear and to think and ponder over the signs of God in nature, Man and History.

As a result of this thinking, we are led, as the Qur'an points out, if we are truthful, to the existence of one God who is Merciful, Kind and Compassionate and Provider of all facilities for the progressive development of human personality. We find that the universe and Man are not created in vain and there is found to be the working of a definite purpose in them. Man is found to be the vicegerent of God on earth. We find constant creation, taking place and Man is found to be the *sumum bonum* of entire creation and the Climax of it. So we intuitively feel and our reason also tells us that death is not the end of life and there is life after death also and there is a purpose working behind this worldly life too. This is knowledge derived from the sources of knowledge with the help of the means of knowledge.

Knowledge, Faith and Reason

So, in the Qur'an we find three things — (1) Means of knowledge, (2) Source of knowledge and (3) Universal basic knowledge. Now the Qur'an draws our attention to

these means and sources of basic knowledge and tells us that a truthful man will come to the same conclusions which will constitute the above — mentioned basic knowledge which will take the form of Faith (*Iman*) and the constituents of this basic knowledge, will become the principles of action for the human beings. Thus the Qur'an is not a separate source of knowledge. But it is a book that draws our attention to these universal means and sources of basic human knowledge and asks us to see for ourselves and draw the above-mentioned conclusions emerging from the reflection over these sources of knowledge with the help of these means of knowledge.

Different Types of Revelation

The Qur'an mentions revelation of four types in general and of three types to Man and even a honey-bee is stated to have revelation. The Qur'an mentions Moses's mother also to have received revelation though she was not a prophet.[3] Some types of revelation can be had by any good human being and only the fourth one is reserved for prophets though according to great Sufi Philosophers like Ibn 'Arabi, Suhrawardy and other Sufi Philosophers 'Sufi-gnostics were not only deputies of the Prophet, but also his heirs *(Wuratha')* and were even participants in his apostlic mission.'[4]

Revelations — Same in Kind, but Different in Degree

Sufis used to receive *Kashf*, which is a sort of revelation and according to Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, different kinds of revelation, are not qualitatively different from one another[5]. So, according to Dr. Iqbal, there is no difference in kind in them, but difference only in degree.

Revelation — Not Advanced as an Argument

It is worth noting that the Qur'an, actually never advances revelation as an argument for others. Revelation which is a sort of intuition makes things and principles clear to the receiver of revelation and then there is an appeal to the intuition and intellect of other human beings to use reason and ponder over the signs of God in Nature, Man

(one's own self) and History and get convinced themselves about the validity of the laws of Nature, Man and his society and History which are ultimately the reflections of the qualities of God (*Sifat* of God).

Importance of Scientific and Philosophical Knowledge in Islam

By now, it might have become obvious that in Islam, knowledge is given great importance, as it helps in seeing the signs of God in Nature, Man and History and also helps in realising God in ourselves. So acquisition of knowledge — scientific, spiritual and philosophical — by Man through scientific and intuitive experience and intellect, has been considered to be vital for Man. I cannot highlight the importance of knowledge in Islam better than what Sayyed Ameer Ali has done in his famous book *Spirit of Islam*. He wrote:

'We have already referred to the Arabian Prophet's devotion to knowledge and science as distinguishing him from all other Teachers, and bringing him into the closest affinity with the modern world of thought. Medina, the seat of the theocratic commonwealth of Islam, had, after the fall of Mecca, become the centre of attraction, not to the hosts of Arabia only, but also to inquirers from abroad. Here flocked the Persian, the Greek, the Syrian, the Iraqian, and African of diverse hues and nationalities from the north and the west. Some, no doubt, came from curiosity, but most came to seek knowledge and to listen to the words of the Prophet of Islam. He preached of the value of knowledge: 'Acquire knowledge, because he who acquires it in the way of the Lord performs an act of piety; who speaks of it, praises the Lord; who seeks it, adores God; who dispenses instruction in it, bestows alms; and who imparts it to its fitting objects, performs an act of devotion to God. Knowledge enables its possessor to distinguish what is forbidden from what is not; it lights the way to Heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude, our companion when bereft of friends; it guides us to happiness; it sustains us in misery; it is our ornament in the company of friends; it serves as an armour against our enemies.

With knowledge, the servant of God rises to the heights of goodness and to a noble position, associates with sovereigns in this world, and attains to the perfection of happiness in the next.

'He would often say, the ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the martyr:, and repeatedly impress on his disciples the necessity of seeking for knowledge "even unto China'. 'He who leaves his home in search of knowledge, walks in the path of God'. He who travels in search of knowledge, to him God shows the way to paradise.

'The Qur'an itself bears testimony to the supreme value of learning and science. Commenting on the Surat al-Alaq, Zamakhashari thus explains the meaning of the Qur'anic words: "God taught human beings that which they did not know, and this testified to the greatness of His beneficence, for He has given to his servants knowledge of that which they did not know. And He has brought them out of the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge, and made them aware of the inestimable blessings of the knowledge of writing, for great benefits accrue therefrom which God alone compasseth; and without the knowledge of writing no other knowledge *(uloom)* could be comprehended, nor the sciences placed within bounds, nor the history of the ancients be acquired and their sayings be recorded, nor the revealed books be written; and if that knowledge did not exist, the affairs of religion and the world, could not be regulated.

'Up to the time of the Islamic Dispensation, the Arab world, properly so called, restricted within the Peninsula of Arabia and some outlying tracts to the north-west and the north-east, had shown no signs of intellectual growth. Poetry, oratory, and judicial astrology formed the favourite objects of pursuit among the pre-Islamic Arabs. Science and literature possessed no votaries. But the words of the Prophet gave a new impulse to the awakened energies of the race. Even within his lifetime was formed the nucleus of an educational institution, which in after years grew into universities at Bagdad and Salerno, at Cairo and Cordova. Here preached the Master himself on the cultivation of a holy spirit: 'One hour's meditation on the work of the

Creator [in a devout spirit] is better than seventy years of prayer. 'To listen to the instructions of science and learning for one hour is more meritorious than attending the funerals of a thousand martyrs, — more meritorious than standing up in prayer for a thousand nights'. 'To the student who goes forth in quest of knowledge, God will allot a high place in the mansions of bliss; every step he takes is blessed, and every lesson he receives has its reward.' 'The seeker of knowledge will be greeted in heaven with a welcome from the angels; to listen to the words of the learned, and to instill into the heart the lessons of science, is better than religious exercises... better than emancipating a hundred slaves'; 'Him who favours learning and the learned, God will favour in the next world;' 'He who honors the learned honours me.'[6]

References

1. Al-Qur'an (4:28)
2. *Ibid.*, (16:68, 69)
3. *Ibid.*, (28:7)
4. Ibrahim Taufic, and Sagdeev Arthur, *op. cit.*, pp.331.
5. Iqbal Muhammad, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-27.
6. Ali Sayyid Ameer, *The Spirit of Islam* (Christopher's, London, Great Britain, 1922), pp. 360-362.

3

Different Types of Revelation as Mentioned in the Qur'an

In Islam, beliefs are principles of action and they are based on the universal experience of revelation as experienced by all human beings. So, according to the Qur'an, beliefs are not dogmas and revelation is not confined to prophets only.

Three Types of Revelation to Man

In the Qur'an, it is said, 'And it is not for any mortal that Allah should speak to him except by inspiring or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger and revealing by His permission, what he pleases'?[1]

Here three types of revelation to man are mentioned:

1. The first type of *Wahy* (revelation) is in the original sense of the word 'Wahy' which means 'infusing into the heart' or 'a hasty suggestion'. This is also called *Wahy Khafiy*, i.e. inner revelation (*Wahy Ghair Mutluww*) which is distinguished from revelation (as if) in words (*Wahy-i Mutluww*).
2. Second type of revelation is from behind a veil which can be *Ruya* (dream), *Kashf* (vision) or *Ilham* hearing of voices or uttering of voices in a state of trance when the recipient is in a state of relaxation i.e. neither quite

asleep nor fully awake when the recipient's sixth sense is awakened). The first two types of revelation can be had by non-prophets also as they could be had by the prophets too.[2]

3. The third type of revelation is (as if) in words brought by archangel Gabriel. This is called *Wahy matluww* (revelation that is recited in words).

Angels — the Carriers of the Laws of Nature which Express the Attributes of God

Angels are the agencies of God which bring into practical operation the laws of nature which, in fact, express the Attributes of God Who is always in new glory.

So the law of revelation is also brought into operation by the angels. But the revelation being of different orders and levels, different angels specified for different levels, do their respective work. Angel Gabriel is meant for bringing only the third type of revelation (which is *Wahy Matluww* i.e. revelation in words) which was meant only for prophets and this third type is ended with Prophet Mohammed (peace be on him), because he is the seal of all the prophets who lived and preached before him.

The Same *Din*, but Different *Shari'as* of the Prophets

As the prophets had to work in the society amongst human beings and bring about their spiritual elevation and social transformation, they had the common and universal *Din* (Religion) but varying or differing *Sharias* as they appeared at different times and at different places.

As the Qur'an points out that Prophet Muhammed emphasised the same two points of belief (1) in one God and (2) doing of good deeds and avoiding of bad deeds. the Qur'an also points out that this is what the conscience *(Qalb)* of every human being also says, as every human being is born on the nature of God[3] and God's spirit is breathed into every human being as the Qur'an points out.[4]

Sharias of different prophets are different, as their circumstances were different, but their *Din* (Religion) was

the same which is called Islam by the Qur'an. So *Shariat* can change now and can be different in different countries and also different in the same country over different periods of time. The only point that is to be emphasised is that the universal and common principles of Islam should be applied to all these *Sharias* so that they become the expressions of the basic spirit of the *Din* (Religion) of Islam.

Relationship between Revelation and Intellect

Just as telescope and microscope are meant to help the eyes to see better, in the same way, revelation is meant to help intellect to understand reality better. But if we close the eyes, the telescope and microscope cannot help us to see. In the same way, if we do not use intellect, revelation cannot help us. Reason is in the place of eyes and revelation is in the place of telescope and microscope. Reason includes some level of a person's spiritual experience besides intellect. So reason is not the alternative to revelation and they are complementary. The Qur'an also lays emphasis on the importance of Reason and asks people to think and ponder over the signs of mercy and providence of God in Nature, in Men and in History and does not use revelation as an argument. That is the private question between the Prophet and God. Knowledge is based on experience and experience is organised by intellect in order to frame concepts and so intellect accepts scientific and spiritual experience — both as facts. But in philosophy, both the experiences are examined with the help of reason in order to capture pure experience and remove the elements of impurity that might have crept in and got mixed up with pure spiritual experience. So, Islam is not only religion, but it is also a philosophy of being, Man and the universe.

Meaning of Finality of Prophethood

When the finality of prophethood is referred to, it means that Religion has now become conscious and the authorities are now ended and Man is thrown on his own shoulders and now he should study Nature, his own self and History and try to understand the laws of God (reflecting His

Attributes) working in them and the law of *Karma* and its recompense.

Thus prophetic revelation and individual human conscience do not come in conflict with each other, on the contrary, prophetic revelation reinforces the common voice of human conscience which, sometimes, human beings do not hear clearly or do not pay heed to because as the Qur'an points out, man is born weak[5] and so he easily becomes a prey to satanic and devilish machinations which appear in the form of selfishness, greed, envy and cruelty in the society.

The first two types of revelation can be had by prophets as well as by non-prophets. So, referring to Moses's mother, it is said in the Qur'an.

'And we revealed to Mose's Mother, saying: "Give him suck and when thou fearest for him, cast him into the river, and do not fear nor grieve for. We will bring him back to thee and make him one of the apostles.'[6]

Referring to the disciples of Jesus Christ, it is said in the Qur'an 'And when I revealed to the disciples (of Jesus), saying Believe in Me and My Apostle.'[7]

Moses's mother received revelation, but she was not a prophet. In the same way, disciples of Jesus Christ were not prophets and still the Qur'an mentions them as recipients of revelation from God.

Sufis also have the experience of *Ruya*, *Kashf* and *Ilham* which are different types of revelation to man from God and Dr. Muhammed Iqbal points out that they are not qualitatively different from revelation to prophets. He wrote:

'The Prophet of Islam seems to stand between the ancient and the modern world. In so far as the source of his revelation is concerned he belongs to the ancient world; in so far as the spirit of his revelation is concerned he belongs to the modern world. In him life discovers other sources of knowledge suitable to its new direction. The birth of Islam, as I hope to be able presently to prove to your satisfaction, is the birth of inductive intellect. In Islam

prophecy reaches its perfection in discovering the need of its own abolition. This involves the keen perception that life cannot for ever be kept in leading strings; that in order to achieve full self-consciousness man must finally be thrown back on his own resources. The abolition of priesthood and hereditary kingship in Islam, the constant appeal to reason and experience in the Qur'an, and the emphasis that it lays on Nature and History as sources of human knowledge, are all different aspects of the same idea of finality. *The idea, however, does not mean that mystic experience, which qualitatively does not differ from the experience of the prophet, has now ceased to exist as a vital fact. Indeed the Qur'an regards both* 'Anfus' *(self) and* 'Afaq' *(world) as sources of knowledge. God reveals His signs in inner as well as outer experience, and it is the duty of man to judge the knowledge yielding capacity of all aspects of experience.*

The idea of finality, therefore, should not be taken to suggest that the ultimate fate of life is complete displacement of emotion by reason. Such a thing is neither possible nor desirable. *The intellectual value of the idea is that it tends to create an independent critical attitude towards mystic experience by generating the belief that all personal authority, claiming a supernatural origin, has come to an end in the history of man. This kind of belief is a psychological force which inhibits the growth of such authority.* The function of the idea is to open up fresh vistas of knowledge in the domain of man's inner experience. Just as the first half of the formula of Islam has created and fostered the spirit of a critical observation of man's outer experience by divesting the forces of nature of that divine character with which earlier cultures had clothed them. Mystic experience, then, however, unusual and abnormal must now be regarded by a Muslim as a perfectly natural experience, open to critical scrutiny like other aspects of human experience. This is clear from the Prophet's own attitude towards Ibn Sayyad's psychic experiences. The function of sufism in Islam has been to systematise mystic experience; though it must be admitted that Ibn Khaldun was the only Muslim who approached

it in a thoroughly scientific spirit.

'But inner experience is only one source of human knowledge. According to the Qur'an there are two other sources of knowledge — Nature and History.'[8]

Revelation to Human Beings and Non-Human Entities

According to the Qur'an, revelation from God is not only the common experience of humanity, but it is bestowed on other animate and even inanimate beings also. Thus referring to honey bee, it is said in the Qur'an, 'And thy Lord revealed to the bee, saying, make hives in the mountains and in the trees and in what they build, then eat of all the fruits and walk in the ways of thy Lord submissively.'[9]

The Qur'an mentions revelation to have been granted to even inanimate things. Referring to the earth, in the Qur'an, it is mentioned, 'When the earth is shaken with her shaking, and the earth brings forth her burdens, and man says, what has befallen her? On that day, she shall tell her news, as if thy Lord had revealed to her.'[10]

Thus we observe that besides two types of *wahy* which could be revealed to any human being that God pleases and one type of *wahy*, the highest order being confined only to the prophet human beings, there are revelations of different orders revealed to animate as well as non-animate objects.

Reason and Revelation — Complementary

It is also worth noting that the Qur'an never advances revelation as an alternative to Reason or human conscience. Revelation being a private experience, it is a private matter between the recipient and God and so when the recipient comes to the society, he has to advance arguments which might have become clear and convincing due to the insight acquired through the deep touch of revelation. Thus revelation reinforces reason and it is not advanced as an alternative to reason or argument. When a person receives revelation, he or she becomes convinced due to its direct experience, but it is not the experience of other people in

the society. So when he approaches the society, he has to argue with clear arguments (made possible by revelatory experience) or make them experience themselves by showing the ways *(Tariqas)* of being enabled to experience it, as the Sufis used to do it. In experience, there may be a difference of degree, but the kind is the same, quality is the same as Dr. Iqbal has pointed out. So either personal experience or argument based on experience are the only alternatives. Argument on the basis of mere authority of revelation from God had not been advanced by the Qur'an. To argue on the basis of authority is to create dogmatism which is foreign to the spirit of Qur'an. Because then the scholars of Islam will monopolise the interpretation of Islam and will declare one another's interpretation to be officially false. Islam being a natural religion, it will not do that, nay, it has come to oppose all kinds of authoritarianism in all its forms in the world and this anti-authoritarian approach of Islam becomes evident from its stern opposition to idol worship and associating any partner with God. God is Unique in His self and in His attributes also according to the Qur'an.

The Qur'an has rejected authoritarianism and advocated the method of reason and experience for the search and realisation of Truth as it becomes evident from the perusal of its verses. Real human progress and genuine happiness and personality development also result from the adoption of this method in life. Sufis adopted this method, but many of the Muslim jurists adopted the method of authoritarianism and tried to minimise the importance of *Ijtihad* and resorted to blind imitation. They did not realise that in this fast changing world, blind imitation leads to spiritual death and consequent social chaos.

Scienticism parading in the name of science also is a sort of dogmatism and conservatism which lead to the same results.

Conservatism and Dogmatism — Bad in Religion as well as Science

Conservatism and dogmatism result from the authoritarian approach in the field of religion and even

in that of science. Authoritarianism comes as an alternative to Reason based on experience and the voice of human conscience. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal has shed good light on this point. He wrote:

'Conservatism is as bad in religion as in any other department of human activity. It destroys the ego's creative freedom and closes the paths of fresh spiritual enterprise. This is the main reason why our medieval mystic techniques can no longer produce original discoveries of ancient Truth. The fact, however, that religious experience is incommunicable does not mean that the religious man's pursuit is futile. Indeed, the incommunicability of religious experience gives us a clue to the ultimate nature of the ego. In our daily social intercourse we live and move in seclusion, as it were. We do not care to reach the inmost individuality of men. We treat them as mere functions, and approach them from those aspects of their identity which are capable of conceptual treatment.

The climax of religious life, however, is the discovery of the ego as an individual deeper than his conceptually describable habitual self-hood. It is in contact with the Most Real that the ego discovers its uniqueness, its metaphysical status, and the possibility of improvement in that status. Strictly speaking, the experience which leads to this discovery is not a conceptually manageable intellectual fact; it is a vital fact, an attitude consequent on an inner biological transformation which cannot be captured in the net of logical categories. It can embody itself only in a world-making or world-shaking act; and in this form alone the content of this timeless experience can diffuse itself in the time-movement, and make itself effectively visible to the eye of history. It seems that the method of dealing with reality by means of concepts is not at all a serious way of dealing with it. Science does not care whether its electron is a real entity or not. It may be a mere symbol, a mere convention. Religion, which is essentially a mode of actual living, is the only serious way of handling Reality. As a form of higher experience it is corrective of our concepts of philosophical theology or at least makes us suspicious of the purely rational

process which forms these concepts. Science can afford to ignore metaphysics altogether, and may even believe it to be 'a justified form of poetry', as Lange defined it, or 'a legitimate play of grown-ups' as Nietzsche described it. But the religious expert who seeks to discover his personal status in the constitution of things cannot, in view of the final aim of his struggle, be satisfied with what science may regard as a vital lie, a mere *'asif'* to regulate thought and conduct. In so far as the ultimate nature of Reality is concerned, nothing is at stake in the venture of science; in the religious venture the whole career of the ego as an assimilative personal centre of life and experience is at stake. Conduct, which involves a decision of the ultimate fate of the agent cannot be based on illusions. A wrong concept misleads the understanding; a wrong deed degrades the whole man, and may eventually demolish the structure of the human ego. The mere concept affects life only partially; the deed is dynamically related to reality and issues from a generally constant attitude of the whole man towards reality. No doubt the deed i.e., the control of psychological and physiological processes with a view to tune up the ego for an immediate contact with the ultimate reality is, and cannot but be, individual in form and content; yet the deed too is liable to be socialised when others begin to live through it with a view to discover for themselves its effectiveness as a method of approaching the real. The evidence of religious experts in all ages and countries is that there are potential types of consciousness lying close to our normal consciousness. *If these types of consciousness open up possibilities of life-giving and knowledge yielding experience the question of the possibility of religion as a form of higher experience is a perfectly legitimate one and demands our serious attention."*[11]

Thus we see that Dr. Iqbal emphasises spiritual experience as a source of knowledge and faith, and advances Experience and Reason as an alternative to authoritarian interpretation of Religion.

References

1. Al-Qur'an (42:51)
2. Muhammed Ali, Maulana, *op. cit.*, pp. 205.
3. Al-Qur'an (30:30, 31).
4. *Ibid.*, (32:9)
5. *Ibid.*, (4:28)
6. *Ibid.*, (28:7)
7. *Ibid.*, (5:111)
8. Iqbal, Muhammad, pp. 126-27.
9. Al-Qur'an (16:68, 69).
10. *Ibid.*, (99:1-5)
11. Muhammad Iqbal, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-184.

4

Three Stages of Islamic Philosophy

In the study of Islamic Philosophy, historically speaking, we pass through three stages: *Kalam* (scholasticism), *Falsafa* (Islamic Aristotelianism) and *Tasawwuf* (Sufism) with its philosophy, though *Falsafa* and *Tasawwuf* (Sufism) are independent disciplines by themselves.

When the Greek, Roman, Indian and Iranian philosophies, sciences, logic and arts were studied by Muslims, *Kalam* developed in which reason was the main arbiter and the main deciding factor. Some scholastics used it to defend Islamic theology and some developed it as an independent discipline which dealt with the existential questions faced by Man.

Falsafa developed specially under the impact of the works of Aristotle. Though Plato was studied, yet his student Aristotle was given more importance and the specialists in Philosophy and Logic of Aristotle, like al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Ibn *Bajja*, Ibn Rushd appeared who not only presented Aristotle's theories in a clearer light but added to them and refined them also. In *Falsafa* specially the non-authoritarian approach was adopted and reason was in the saddle as the main judge and the deciding factor for attaining to Truth in the theories of Islamic Aristotelians. Of course, efforts were always made by

Islamic Aristotelians and also by scholastics *(Mutakallimun)* to develop a synthesis between science, religion and philosophy.

It is true that in *Falsafa*, there were some philosophers who went to the extreme in their wild speculations and in *Kalam* also, some scholastics made some compromises with dogmatic theology in order to make their theories more acceptable to the elites as well as to the masses.

In Sufism, we find two trends—historically speaking — one restricting itself only to deep devotion to God without seeing any necessity of developing some philosophy in support of their Sufist approach. This is devotional Sufism. But as Sufism believed in having individual spiritual experience and gave more importance to the spirit behind the words of the Qur'an and Hadith and to the basic approach of the Qur'an and took into account the aims and purposes of Islamic teachings and believed in tolerance as regards differences in opinions, interpretations and beliefs of others, it had to develop its own Islamic philosophy to justify its approach rationally against the attack on their approach. So, the philosophy in the heart of Sufism developed. Here also arbiter was reason, but reason was not viewed as an alternative to spiritual experience or scientific experience. The function of reason has been to unify experience to form concepts or make judgements and to show inconsistencies between experiences or different facts of experience so that knowledge based on pure experience — scientific and spiritual — can be attained in philosophy, science and religion.

Kalam, Philosophy and *Tasawwuf* — Not Separate Categories

Ghazali criticised wild and extreme speculations in philosophy and thought that some philosophers were coming in the way of experiencing God which Sufism endeavoured to show and thereby they were undermining the certainty of belief in God which Sufism was claiming to give. Of course, he was opposed to dogmatic theologians also, as they were worshippers of words. But his criticism of Islamic

Aristotelians proved to be very unfortunate, historically speaking, because it gave a severe blow to the study of philosophy in Islamic *madrasas* despite the able reply by Ibn Rushd to Ghazali in defence of Philosophy. Without the touch of philosophy, Islamic jurists *(Fuqaha')* got ascendancy in Islamic teachings and acquired a dominant position among the Muslim masses. Philosophy is the greatest killer of dogmas and without the healthy touch of philosophy, religion loses its spirit and turns into orthodoxy which is opposite to religion in the true sense of the term. In the Qur'an, we find religion, philosophy and scientific approach. In Ghazali's philosophy, *Kalam, Falsafa* and *Tasawwuf* remained separate categories. But, in later sufi philosophy which started from the beginning of the 13th century, *Kalam, Falasafa* and *Tasawwuf* coalesced into a unified philosophy of *Ishraq* of Suhrawardy and specially into the powerful philosophy of *Wahdat al-Wujud* of Ibn 'Arabi though they continued their onward march separately also in their respective fields.

Ontic Monism and Panentheism *versus* Plain Monism and Pantheism

In Islam, God is essentially transcendental, but He is immanent also. In India, the aspect of immanence of God was emphasised more and hence the theory of monism was developed. Islam (and also Judaism and Christianity) believed in Monotheism and so they laid more emphasis on the transcendental aspect of God. The philosophy of Unity of Being i.e. 'There is no being except that of Allah' *(Wahdat al-Wujud)* as developed by Ibn 'Arabi in his capacity as an Islamic Sufi-Philosopher, was the logical culmination of Monotheism that there is no god except one God — Allah. Ibn 'Arabi developed the Immanence aspect of God without sacrificing the transcendental aspect of God. The principle of all in all in the spirit of panentheism was very near to Leibnizian monadology. Ibn 'Arabi's theory can be described as ontic monism. Thus he synthesised transcendentalism of God and his Immanence without supporting idol worship. God is in everything and every being, but he is so in a transcendental way. God's

transcendentalism and his immanence meet in his infinities. We all are parts of God and we all human-beings and all other creatures and things in the universe, reflect the glory and light of God, but no part, no human being or no creature is God Himself. So there is no *Avatar* or Incarnation of God or there is no son of God and there is no special community favoured by God. All human-beings are equal as human-beings before God.

There was the charge against Islamic sufist philosophy that it preaches pantheism, but actually it was panentheism as developed by Ibn 'Arabi which was nearer to Leibnizian monadology and it had never compromised its principle of transcendentalism of God, but had only sung the glory of God by taking into account the immanence of God. But misunderstanding this, some Sufis under the impact of the approach of Imam Hanbal and the Hanbalites, opposed this sufist philosophy of *Wahdat al-Wujud* while Islamic Jurists also would not digest or understand this tolerant and universal interpretation of the Monotheism of the Qur'an.

Philosophy of *Kalam*

Just as *Tasawwuf* had an endogenous origin and it was the logical result of the concept of transcendental God, in the same way, *Kalam* also had its endogenous origin. But at the centre of *Kalam*, there was reason and it was opposed to authoritarianism as Qur'an is also opposed. Thus *Kalam* differed from theology in its anti-authoritarianism and putting reason as the arbiter in finding truth and in having the solution of existential problems of life and in evolving the world views.

The nature of the Essence or the self *(Zat)* of God and His attributes *(Sifat)* and their relationship, and the createdness or the eternity of Qur'an, the definition of a Muslim and the qualities required for becoming the caliph or the Imam were the questions that were agitating the minds of the scholastics *(Mutakallimun)* and they were trying to provide solutions which synthesised religion, logic and philosophy in the light of reason. In those days of the eighth century, many religious beliefs were associated

with political beliefs and ideologies and hence they had great practical importance alongwith theoretical significance. Kharjites, Murji'ites, Jabrites and Qadarites were such religio-political groups among Muslims. So there were hot discussions and debates among these groups. Also, there were discussions with the followers of other religions and creeds like those of Christianity, Judaism, Mazdaism, etc. Out of these discussions among Muslim groups and also with non-Muslims, slowly but steadily the techniques and theories of *Kalam* developed in the field of Islam which tried to find solutions to the questions mentioned above and which were the main points of controversy among them.

Scholastics *(Mutakallimun)* ultimately got divided into two groups, namely Mu'tazalites and, Asharites.

Mu'tazalites

It was the first major school of Kalam. The etymological meaning of the word 'Mu'tazila' is a person (or a group) who is detached or withdrawn from the warring groups. Historically speaking, they were a distinct group that held a neutral position to the warring Muslim groups in the battle of al-Jamal in A.D. 656 and also of Siffin in A.D. 657. In the eighth century, there was a group of followers of Hasan al-Basri who was a very learned man of Basra, Iraq. His two eminent disciples namely Wasil ibn 'Ata and Amr ibn 'Ubayd differed broadly speaking with him and excluded themselves and hence they were known as Mu'tazalites. The main beliefs of the Mu'tazalites were as follows.

1. *Justice*

In Islam, Justice is one of the main principles. But the moral responsibility of an individual human being, implies freedom on the part of individual pertaining to his actions. If the good or bad actions of the individual are predetermined by God, and then if God punishes a person in this world and in the Hereafter for his bad actions, then there is no justice in it and God being Just, this is not possible. Also if a person does good deeds, as it is so determined by God and then God rewards him for his or

her good deeds then also it is not justice but favouritism while God is Just and does not entertain any favouritism or discrimination. So the theory of predestination imposed from without on Man and not springing from his self within is not consistent with the concept of Just God and God can never be unjust.

According to the Qur'an, every human being is born on the nature *(fitrat)* of God[1] and the spirit of God is breathed into every human being[2]. But Man is born as a weak animal also and he or she easily becomes a prey to worldly temptations and resorts to untruth for some worldly gains. This disintegrates his personality and reduces his capacity for getting happiness. So God is not responsible for his bad deeds and consequent unhappiness, every individual himself or herself is responsible for his or her fate. Thus *'Adl* or God's justice is one of the basic principles of Islam according to the mutazalites which implies human freedom to do good or bad deeds and thereby to that extent, it limits the freedom of God. This had political implications also. Because if a person himself is responsible for his bad deeds, then it means that if the caliph does any bad deeds, he himself is responsible for it and so he may be opposed.

2. *Monotheism (Tawhid)*

God is unique not only in his self *(Dhat)* or Essence but in his attirbutes *(Sifat)* also and nobody or nothing can be compared or associated with Him. Idol-worship regardig the self of God leads to polytheism while the idol-worship pertaining to His attributes leads to anthropomorphism Qur'an rejects both polytheism and anthropomorphism and sticks to pure Monotheism. So Islam is a right and scientific method to realise God, i.e. to meet God.

According to the Mu'tazalites, attributes of God are the attributes of His essence (self) and so His attributes cannot be taken as separate from His essence. These attributes, according to them, are life, knowledge and power which are eternal as God's essence is. But there are some attributes of action like speaking, hearing, willing, which

are not attributes of essence of God and so they are changeable over-time. Thus Qur'an is the expression of the speech of God and so it is created by God and not uncreated and eternal as God's essence is or His attributes of essence are. But here, there is some confusion of thought on the part of the Mu'tazalites. All the attributes of God are eternal as His essence is. In order to prove the createdness of Qur'an, it was not necessary to say that the attributes of speech and hearing are not eternal. God continues to speak to good men and Sufis through *Kashf*. But what is spoken by God, is the spirit, but it takes the form of words in the heart or mind of man. For a prophet, as Iqbal points out, the revelation is so powerful and vivid that there is no distance between spirit and the words and as if even the words also are revealed as he puts it[1]. But words are not uncreated, they are created, but the spirit behind the words is the spirit of God and it was there in the essence of God and hence it is eternal. So Qur'an as the Word, is created and not uncreated and so it did not exist as the word in the past though it may continue to exist in future forever. But as it did not exist in the past, it cannot be called eternal, though its spirit is eternal. So the attributes of action of God also are eternal. If they are not eternal, then they are not attributes of God. So if they are accepted as the attributes of God; then they should be deemed as eternal. We have tried above to remove the inconsistency of the Mu'tazalites as regards their distinction between the attributes of essence of God and His attribute of action.

3. *The Law of Requital of Human Deeds*

God gives happy rewards to doers of good deeds and punishes the evil doers and this is the promise of God *(al-Wa'da)* and working *(al-Wa'id)* of God and so He will definitely carry it out. So no intercession by anybody can work and everybody will get the reward according to his good or bad deeds. Everything is according to its own inherent measurement *(Qadr* or *Taqdir)*. So God's actions are not arbitrary. *His promise is so perfect that it works like a law of requital.*

4. Status of a Muslim who Commits Grave Sins

The question dealt with here is the question about the position of a Muslim who commits grave sins. According to Hasan al-Basri, the teacher of Wasil ibn 'Ata, such a person was *Munafiq* (hypocrite), but Wasil ibn 'Ata thought that he was a *fasiq* (sinner) and so he retained all his basic rights in the capacity of a member of the Muslim Society and hence should enjoy the security of life and property, the right of inheritance, etc. but he could not become a caliph or an *Imam* while his teacher believed that he became a *Munafiq* and so he forfeits most of these rights. So Wasil ibn 'Ata excluded himself from the circle of the followers of Hasan al-Basri and so they were called Mu'tazalites. Liberal Murjites believed that such Muslim sinners are neither *Munafiq* nor *fasiq* and they continue to be believers i.e. Muslims. On the other extreme, Kharijites believed that they became infidels. Mu'tazalites toed the middle position (as we have just seen) which is called in Arabic, *al-Manzilah bayn al-Manzilatayn.*

5. The Principle of Enjoining the Good Deeds and Stopping the Bad Deeds (Al-Amr bil-M'aruf Wa-nahi-'an il-Munkar)

This is the principle of Qur'an. Thus they believed that all the Muslims should positively try to do deeds which are universally accepted as good deeds and avoid deeds that are universally considered to be bad deeds by all human beings. So, the exploitation and torture of the people by the powerful people should be tried to be stopped by word and deed which did not exclude the legal or the violent ones, if necessary.

The hymn that was written in praise of Bishr ibn al-Mu'tamar who was the founder of the Baghdad School of Mu'tazalites was as follows which sang the praise of Reason in unbounded terms:

How magnificent is reason — the guide
And companion in happiness and misfortune,
The judge who decides the absence

Precisely of things that exist!
How mightily he whose capacity it is
To differentiate good and evil.
And it is he that God selected as
The fullest sanctity and purity.[3]

Let us now discuss the beliefs of the 'Asharites.

'Asharites

According to the 'Asharites also, Reason was the main deciding factor. But in order to meet the challenges of the dogmatic theologians, they made some compromises without losing the basic position of the Mu'tazalites.

Attributes of Speech and Vision — Related to Essence of God

According to 'Asharites, not only life, knowledge and power are the attributes of God related to His essence, but the attributes of hearing, vision and speech also are related to the essence of God. This was one point of difference between Mu'tazalites and 'Asharites. But they agreed with the Mu'tazalites in denying the attributes of action like feeding, creating, etc. as eternal and asserting that they arise over time. But, in my humble opinion, feeding, creating etc. are the expressions of the attributes and not the attributes themselves and the attributes are eternal.

Attributes Express the Essence of God

Most of the theologians believed that the attributes of God are things separate from the essence of God. 'Asharites believed that the attributes of God are names expressing and indicating the essence of God. Some 'Asharites used the word — *Hal* (Modus) for the attribute. It means that the attribute shows the self-expression of God.

Kalam al-Lafzi* and *Kalam al-Nafsi

The 'Asharites accepted the eternity of Qur'an on the basis of the eternity of the attribute of speech of God which was associated with the essence of God. But they made

a distinction between *Kalam al-Lafzi* (verbal speech) and *Kalam al-Nafsi* (internal speech). The verbal expression was considered by them to be created over time and hence non-eternal while the spirit or the meaning behind the words was considered uncreated and therefore eternal.

Anthropomorphic Concept of God — Denied

'Asharites were one with the Mu'tazalites in denying the anthropomorphic concepts of God which implied seeing God physically with the naked eyes on the Day of Judgement, but they believed that God can be seen in terms of knowledge *(Ma'rifat)*.

According to Mu'tazalites, man was created by God as a sub-creator while 'Asharites did not accept man as a sub-creator and propounded the theory that human actions are created by God, but they are actually then performed by man. Thus they developed the theory of *Kasab* (i.e. performance). God is the ultimate creator of everything and so man has the freedom to adopt any of these deeds which are created by God. So as a human being, Man has got the freedom of performance or choosing from the deeds ultimately created by God. So the moral responsibility of Man remains and it is not wiped out.

Thus, we observe that the scholastics *(Mutakallimūn)* — Mutazalites as well as the 'Asharites tried to grapple with the problems of the relationship between revelation and intellect, faith and reason, God and the Universe, nature of the essence and the attributes of God and their inter-relationships etc. Their endeavours in this direction were valiant, brilliant and brave, and courageous. Reason being their main criterion of judgement, it came nearer to Philosophy, as Islamic philosophy was also based on Reason. But though Reason had an independent position in *Kalam*, still they were trying to defend the basic principles of Islam in the light of Reason. They were the acute dialecticians who interpreted the Qur'an in a liberal and truer way. They were using reason in the right way to discover truth and to defend truth and defend liberal Islam.

Some Prominent Islamic Philosophers

Some basic existential questions which were dealt with in *Kalam* in the light of Reason and also in the theological context, were dealt with boldly and quite independently in Philosophy by Muslim intellectuals. This was *Falsafa* or Islamic philosophy which meant Philosophy as entertained and developed by Muslim Philosophers.

Philosophy of al-Kindi

The first name that strikes us in this respect is that of al-Kindi who can be deemed to be the father of Islamic philosophy. He was the first Arab Philosopher (in my opinion, he was a second one, because Prophet Muhammad was the first Arab Philosopher and the first Islamic Sufi who was also the Last Prophet) and who is considered to be the founder of Islamic philosophy. He wrote more than 200 works on philosophy, medicine, psychology, astronomy, geography, chemistry and music etc. One of his best philosophical works was also *A Treatise on the Number of the Works of Aristotle and on what is Needed for the Mastery of Philosophy*. His other very important philosophical works are — *The Book of Five Essences, On the First Philosophy, A treatise on the Finitude of the Body of the World and on the Proximate Efficient Course of Generation and Corruption*. He discussed the theories of Aristotle, Plato, Pythagorians, Plotinus and Proclus. He laid the foundation of secular philosophy among Muslims. He believed that the knowledge about the true nature or the ultimate nature of all things physical, vegetarian, animal and human kingdoms is necessary. Knowledge of God, His uniqueness, nature of revelation, the nature of good and bad deeds is also very essential which is studied in philosophy with the help of intellect. So, the study of philosophy is very necessary to understand the Qur'an also. Philosophy is a search for truth and search for truth can never be a wrong thing. When many persons pursue philosophy, the mistakes get mutually corrected and many are eliminated and reliable knowledge gets accumulated over a period of time. Thus horizontally and vertically,

the process for correcting mistakes and weeding out untruth, takes place. The pursuit of philosophy leads to the true understanding of Religion also, here, Islam. But the dogmatic theologians who claimed monopoly over understanding of Truth and Islam and also had developed their own individual vested interests in this monopoly, opposed philosophy. Al-Kindi believed that these dogmatic theologians were full of jealousy and wanted to retain their monopoly over the Trade of Truth in which they had been shamelessly indulging. Seeking of truth and seeing of truth, requires virtue on the part of the person who seeks it. Dogmatic theologians lack virtue and their knowledge and seal for seeking it, are very limited and hence they are incapable of understanding faith, religion and Islam. They charge philosophers with the lack of faith, but such people themselves lack real faith and that is why they are led to oppose philosophy. The study of philosophy will impart understanding and hence will create real conviction and real belief and faith. Al-Kindi went on well with Caliphs al-Ma'mun and al-*Mu'tasim* and could get their patronage, but he suffered under the caliphate of al-Mutawakkil.

He was born in Kufa, Iraq, in the beginning of the 8th century A.D. and died in Baghdad between A.D. 860 and 879.

It is said that his ideas were more liberal and progressive than what he wrote, but due to limitations of the given circumstances in his days, he could not express himself fully. Still, he expressed many of his ideas very boldly. Also, he was the pioneer in deriving the inner meaning and the spirit of the verses of the Qur'an.

Emergence of Ismailism

In the tenth century A.D., a new development took place in Islamic philosophy due to the emergence of Isma'ilism which is a sect of Shiite Islam. The followers of Isma'ilism were against the 'Abbasid Caliphs and they had launched many political movements against them along with their philosophical pursuits. They differentiated between the external *(Zahiri)* meaning of the verses of the Qur'an and

their internal *(Batini)* meaning. The common masses took into account the external meaning of the words and the dogmatic theologians played on it and widened the sectarian differences but the inner meanings of the verses were clear to the spiritually awakened ones and these inner meanings had no sectarian or religious differences and they invited the people for good purposes and good actions. But according to the Isma'ilis, such spiritually awakened ones were *Imams*. So a teacher or a mentor was necessary to initiate a person for travelling from the external to the inner meaning of the verses of the Qur'an. Their philosophy tried to evolve a synthesis between philosophies of the East and the West. World and Man were emanations from one God and thus their philosophy was based on the Neoplatonic concept of emanation from God and God's transcendence. He cannot be known but through His attributes, and something of the self of God can be glimpsed by the spiritually awakened ones. Intellect suffused by spiritual experience, took the form of Reason and hence could understand the real inner meanings of the verses of the Qur'an and hence religious and sectarian differences creating conflicts in the society, were lessened due to the working of the common principle and the method of Reason.

Ikhwan al-Safa (Brethren of Purity)[4]

Some active followers of this Isma'ili philosophy came together and established an organisation which was known as *Ikhwan al-Safa* — the Brethren of Purity. They wrote voluminous works consisting of 52 volumes elaborating their philosophy and approach. They did not believe in the blind following of religion, because without true understanding of and conviction about the principles of Islam, really good deeds cannot follow and bad deeds cannot be avoided and under these circumstances, only sectarian and religious differences crop up leading to intolerance and bloodshed.

Four Kinds of People

The Brethren of Purity, who were also known as encyclopaedists, divided people of any society into four groups:

1. People who believed only in the importance of the religious sciences and did not care to study experimental sciences;
2. People who thought only experimental sciences to be capable of imparting reliable knowledge and hence they did not see the necessity for the study of religious sciences; which according to them, did not give any reliable knowledge.
3. The people who studied neither religious sciences nor experimental sciences; and
4. Those people who strongly believed that the study and the real understanding of both the sciences — religious and scientific ones are necessary in order to understand truth in all its aspects.

Brethren of Purity belonged to Fourth Class

Let apart their Shi'a beliefs pertaining to Imamate with which all cannot agree, their general beliefs of universal character and their emphasis on Reason as the criterion of judgement were praiseworthy and laudable principles.

The spirit of tolerance and seriousness of purpose as shown by the Brethren of Purity was remarkable. They believed that if a person is satisfied with the external and literal meaning of the verses of the Qur'an and neglects the inner meaning and their real spirit and purpose working behind these verses, then that person possessed a body, but he had no mind. Man is a rational animal and every human being has got the faculty of reason and so different persons understand the Qur'an and Hadith differently. That is why there are so many sects in Islam. But there is a saying of Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) that difference of opinion is the blessing of God. When there is free expression of thought by many people, they correct the mistakes of one another and thus it becomes a co-operative effort of all in understanding true Islam and in understanding real truth. There is a difference between true faith and blind faith. So doubt is necessary to reach true faith. Doubt eliminates wrong beliefs and leads to the correct ones and true knowledge. Thus doubt is not

against true faith, but it is against blind faith and helps in reaching true faith by helping in the elimination of wrong beliefs which paves the way for reaching true beliefs.

According to them, God can be known by studying and pondering over his creations. In his creations, we see the great Intelligence and the mercy of God working.

Al-Farabi

Al-Kindi had made the beginning of Philosophy among Muslim intellectuals. The Brethren of Purity paved the way for the rise of Islamic Aristotelians. The first name that occurs in the list of Islamic Aristotelians is that of Abu Nasir al-Farabi.

To Muslim philosophers, Philosophy had become almost synonymous with Aristotelian philosophy and so they had made valiant efforts to reconcile Aristotelian Philosophy with Islam. Afterwards some Muslim philosophers had tried to develop the theory of Neoplatonism which, by mistake, they had thought, was the part of Aristotelian system.

Al-Farabi was born in A.D. 870 in the city of Faraba. He was educated in Harran and Baghdad. He classified the sciences and wrote the *Survey of Sciences*. He also wrote a book called *Harmony between the Views of Plato and Aristotle* which tried to create a synthesis between the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. The title of his other major works were *The Attainment of Happiness*, *Reminder of the Way of Happiness*, *Aphorisms of the Statesman*, *The Philosophy of Plato*, *The Philosophy of Aristotle* and *The Virtuous City* (on the pattern of Plato's *Republic*).

Al-Farabi had explained Aristotle's philosophy in very clear terms. Even a great mind like Ibn Sina, when he, in the beginning, tried to understand Aristotle directly, he found it difficult, because it was not clear. But when he read al-Farabi's works on the subject, then he became perfectly clear about Aristotle's thoughts and views. Such was the mastery of al-Farabi over Aristotle's works. The philosophy of emanation of the world from God was introduced by him in Islamic philosophy. He also made

a distinction between *Wajib al-Wujud* and *Mumkin al-Wujud*, i.e., the Necessary Existent and the possible Existent. The possible existent i.e. the world had emanated from the Necessary Existent (God), but it was the part of the Necessary Existent, i.e. God. It had emanated from God and was not created from nothing by God. al-Farabi died in Damascus in A.D. 950 at the age of 80 years, but he had already laid the firm foundation of Islamic philosophy and had won respectability for the study of philosophy among Muslim intellectuals and elites. The eminence of al-Farabi's stature can be gauged by taking into account the fact that al-Farabi was considered to be the second Teacher *(Mo'allim Sani)* while Aristotle being considered to be the First Teacher *(Mo'allim Awwal)*.

Ibn Sina

Then comes Abu Ali Ibn Sina (Avicenna), one of the most towering personalities in Islamic philosophy. He was the most famous physician of his times and was a great original thinker and philosopher. He was born in A.D. 980 in the village of Afshan neighbouring Bukhara. His book *Canon of Medicine* is very famous and it was studied up to the 17th century in the universities of Europe. He wrote *The Book of Healing, The Book of Salvation, The Book of Demonstrations and Affirmations, The Book of Knowledge* and *The Book of Directions and Remarks*. He also wrote stories of *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan, The Treatise of the Bird, Salman and Absal.* He wrote on Sciences and Philosophy and tried to reconcile science and religion in the light of Aristotelian philosophy. He was the supporter of sufi-gnostics and believed that Sufist experience or spiritual experience is the basis of knowledge about the ultimate reality which is God. He was sternly opposed to blind faith and dogmatism based on it and believed in the supremacy of Reason which was, in fact, not opposed to intuition and revelation, but was complementary to it.

He believed in peace and the rule of law and the running of good and efficient administration which required a wise ruler, i.e. a sort of a Philosopher King as conceived in Plato's *Republic*.

Al-Ghazali[5]

Abul Hamid al-Ghazali was in search of certainty as regards the true view of God, Universe and the place and relationship of Man to them. He did not find this kind of certainty in dogmatic theology based on blind beliefs nor in philosophy based on pure intellect and logic. He wanted pulsating faith which gave life to Man and purpose to him. He found this in *Tasawwuf*, i.e. Sufism which provided techniques and ways to have spiritual experience of feeling oneness with God. In the beginning, he felt psychologically much harassed by the logical quiblings and wild speculations found in the philosophical systems of Islamic Aristotelians. Particularly, he was annoyed by the lay intellectualism of Ibn Sina (according to his belief) and so he wrongly thought that philosophy was coming in the way of God-realisation and self-realisation.

Ghazali wrote his famous book 'The Incoherence of the Philosophers' *(Tahafut al-Falasufah)* in which he critisised philosophers on some 20 points and out of these, he found specially 3 points heretical. His criticism was specially directed against Ibn Sina's philosophy which contained these three heretical points also alongwith other controversial points. These three heretical points in the philosophy of Ibn Sina were:

1. Eternity of the world;
2. Monopoly of divine knowledge in single individuals;
3. Impossibility of the resurrection of the same physical body on the Day of Judgement.

Errors of Ghazali's Philosophy

Certain points were not clear in philosophy in those days and Al-Ghazali was mistaken in thinking that according to philosophers, the world was independently eternal of God. God was eternal and the world as the part of God also was eternal. God did not create the world out of nothing, because nothing comes out of nothing. We cannot think that the world was eternal parallel to eternal God. So the world is eternal as the part of eternal God. God is always in new glory as the Qur'an says. So God has

been constantly expressing the richness of His self and the world and Man are His expressions and they are constantly changing and undergoing transformation. So the forms change, but the energy is the same — the energy of God, being expressed through the world and Man.

Prophets get divine knowledge. But there are four forms of revelation in general and three types which are specific to human beings as mentioned in the Qur'an. Two types of revelation can be had by any good human being and Dr. Muhammed Iqbal in his book *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* has written that qualitatively there is no difference between *Kashf* of a Sufi and revelation of a Prophet, though there may be differences of degree. As every man is born on the nature of God and God has breathed of His Spirit in every human being, every human being has got the capacity to know truth and to know what are universally accepted as good deeds and what are universally admitted to be bad deeds. The function of a prophet is to give man glad tidings if he does good deeds *(Bashir)* and to warn him if he resorts to evil deeds *(Nazir)*. Thus he is Basheer (giver of glad tidings) as well as Nazir (Warner for avoiding bad deeds). *Thus revelation was never advanced as an argument or an alternative to arguments or reason. It was a source of Reason, but not Reason itself. Society is concerned with reason and not with the source of reason because the source is personal while reason is social.*

On the Day of Judgement, body will be of a different type and we do not know it will be of what type. But it is certain that it cannot be the same physical body as every individual had on this earth, as it gets disintegrated and is turned into dust after sometime when a man dies. Islamic philosophy continued to develop in the East as well the West despite virulent attacks by Al-Ghazali on Philosophy in his *Incoherence of Philosophers*. In the East, after Ibn Sina's death, his Aristotelian tradition and his approach reconciling science, philosophy and religion continued through the succession of his students — first being Bahmanjar, then his student Lawqari and then likewise up to Nasir al-Din al-Tusi.

Ibn Bajja

In the West, the Aristotelian School was founded by Avempace, i.e. Abu Bakr ibn Bajja. According to him, the essence of man consisted in rationality and virtue. He was born at the end of the eleventh century. His prominent philosophical books are *The Epistle on the Universe of Intellect and Man*, *The Book of the Soul*, *Farewell Epistle* and *The Rule of the Solitary*.

Ibn Bajja was much influenced by the works of al-Farabi. He attached great importance to rational knowledge which was also accompanied by perennial pleasure according to him. He believed in an ideal virtuous society, but in this imperfect world, we are surrounded by imperfect human beings, so wise and rational individuals should not give up the path of truth, rationality and wisdom though such individuals may feel solitary and lonely in the maddening crowd.

He held the post of a Minister twice. But he was also accused of entertaining heretical thoughts. He met the tragic death due to the poisoning by his opponents.

Ibn Tufayl

Ibn Bajja was responsible for influencing Abu Bakr Muhammed ibn Tufayl. Ibn Tufayl was born at the commencement of the 12th century. He has contributed many philosophical, scientific and literary works. In astronomy, he developed his own theory which ran contrary to Ptolemic theory which was the most popular one in those days. During the regime of the caliphs Abd al-Momin and Abu Yaqub Yuṣuf, he was the Minister and also the Court Physician. He is well-known for many of his works, but specially for his story book *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, he is famous in the whole world. He took inspiration for writing this story book from Ibn Sina and Ibn Bajja. We see the effects of the books *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* and *Salman and Absal* written by Ibn Sina and the effect of the book *Rule of the Solitary* written by Ibn Bajja, on Ibn Tufayl's famous story book *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*.

In this book, Ibn Tufayl narrates the story of a human child coming out of the nature itself and reared by a gazelle who had lost its kid.

The boy is called Hayy ibn Yaqzan (the Living Son of the Awake). When the gazelle died, the boy was alone in the wilderness and so willy nilly, he had to learn making tools and weapons out of stones and had also to learn to lighten the fire.

When the boy used his hands and changed his external world to some extent, he began to use reason also and started thinking about the world and the place of Man in it. When the gaselle was dying, he tried to save it and he made experiments on the dying gaselle and tried to understand the principle of life working in the living organism. He discovered the rule of life and vitality which was quite in consonance with Nature. He also developed in his own way, a technique of evolving an ecstatic state which helped him to realise and experience the absolute unity of being. This was indicative of a sort of his Sufi gnostic experience.

Then the boy Hayy comes in contact with Absal, a person from the nearby island. Now Absal had made up his mind to pass his life in solitude and also in prayer. Absal teaches Hayy his language. Due to the learning of language, Hayy is enabled to converse with Absal. Absal after exchanging views with Hayy on many topics of existential, philosophical and religious interests is astonished to observe that the basic beliefs of his and his people's religion, when rightly interpreted, were quite in consonance with the existential and philosophical beliefs of the boy arrived at by him in the light of natural reason. So it shows that natural reason i.e. intellect working with pure emotions of the intuitive self has got the capacity to discover Truth.

Ibn Rushd

Ibn Tufayl once introduced Ibn Rushd to caliph Abu Yaqub Yusuf and spoke very highly of his intellectual calibre. The caliph asked Ibn Rushd to write a commentary on the books of Aristotle. In his days, he became the greatest spokesman of Islamic Aristotelianism. In Europe,

he became famous as the authentic commentator on the works of Aristotle. His full name was Abu al-Wahid Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Rushd. He was born in A.D. 1126. Ibn Rushd wrote books on the different subjects of philosophy, different sciences, medicine, jurisprudence etc. He was a great mind and a versatile genius. He wrote commentaries on the works of Aristotle, Plato, Farabi, Ibn Sina, Ibn Bajja, Alexander of Aphrodisias and Nicholas of Damascus. In 1180, he wrote his most famous book *The Incoherence of the Incoherence* in which he tried to refute al-Ghazali's arguments contained in al-Ghazali's equally famous work *'Incoherence of the Philosophers'*. Ibn Rushd's other works namely *Decisive Treatise, Disclosure of the Method* also are very important to understand the nature of faith and knowledge and their relationship.

Ibn Khaldun

His full name was 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Khaldun. He was born in the year 1331 in Tunis.

Ibn Khaldun, as he is popularly known in the East as well as the West, is considered to be the father of the Science of History. He successfully endeavoured to transform the history of kings and even of prophets into the history of the people, their thoughts and feelings and their institutions and tried to develop History as a scientific and objective discipline. One may say that he is the father of modern History which he developed as the part of social philosophy.

Ibn Khaldun adopted the method of reason and relied on observation and experience in explaining the happenings in the natural and the social world.

The most important point emphasised and highlighted by him was the criterion of the truth of a phenomenon, which according to him, was the natural character to which it conformed and not the authenticity of its source. Source of revelation is God, but that should not be taken as a criterion but its conformity to Reason and observation and experience of Man. This approach was not spelled so clearly as it is done here, but his scientific approach and his

discussions on this subject and other similar ones implied it.

Ibn Khaldun tried to explain historical events in human terms which he claimed to be of universal validity, as they manifested the basic tendencies of human nature.

His *Muqaddamah* to his book on History has become very famous. Professor Rosenthal has explained Ibn Khaldun's approach and his theories in his books.

He also studied the internal psychic state of a Sufi and made significant observations which were to some extent, similar to those as expressed in William James's book *Varieties of Religious Experience*. Ibn Khaldun wanted to study religious experience of a sufi, as a source of knowledge about spiritual entities and he wanted to do it scientifically i.e. democratically and in an objective way and not in an authoritative fashion.

It will be befitting to note here that the theories of his Muqaddamah were revived by the supporters of Mr. Ronald Reagan and believers in a free market economy and supply — Side Economics who used them in the U.S.A. in the presidential election propaganda in favour of Mr. Reagan.

He was not only the father of modern history, but he was also a great sociologist, a keen economist and a sound political thinker. Not the least important point is that, his commitment with Islam was without any doubt, but his approach to Islam was scientific and his interpretation of it was liberal in many ways.

This great historian, scientist and a social philosopher died in A.D. 1406 at the age of 75 years.

Contributions of Muslims to World Philosophy and Science

Mr. M. N. Roy, in his book *The Historical Role of Islam* wrote the following about the contribution of Muslim philosophers and the scientists to World Treasure of Knowledge.

'Until the twelfth century, Islam did not possess a homogenous body of dogmas. Subject to the belief in one

God, the Mussulman had practically unlimited latitude for his spiritual life. And history shows that the Arabian thinkers made free and full use of that flexibility of the new faith. In order to refute the Christian doctrines of trinity, which they considered to be a vulgarisation of the sublime idea of the Supreme God, Muslim theologists developed the fundamental idea of religion to the most abstract form ever conceived by human mind. (Vide Renan, '*Averroes et Averroeism*', p. 76). They could perform that unparalleled feat of theological ratiocination because 'the Monotheism of Mohammad was the most absolute, and comparatively the freest from mythical adulterations'. (F.A. Lange, *The History of Materialism*, vol. I, p. 184). The same authority testifies to the fact that the fundamental principles of religion laid down crudely by the founder of Islam were pregnant with the possibility of great development. And because of their rigid monotheistic nature, the development inevitably transcended the narrow limits of religious thought and culminated into a spiritual efflorescence which closed the age of faith. 'Even before the communication of Greek philosophy to the Arabians, Islam had produced numerous sects and theological schools, some of which entertained so abstract a notion of God that no philosophical speculation could proceed farther in this direction, whilst others believed nothing but what could be understood and demonstrated.... In the high school at Basra, there arose, under the protection of the 'Abbasides, a school of rationalists which sought to reconcile religion and faith". (*Ibid.*, p. 177).

'The age of Arabian learning lasted about five hundred years, and coincided with the darkest period of European history. During the same period, India also was lying prostrate, under the triumphant Brahmanical reaction which had subverted or corrupted Buddhism. Eventually, it was, thanks to the inglorious success of having overcome the Buddhist revolution, that India fell such an easy prey to Muslim invaders.

'Under the enlightened reign of the Abbasides, the Fatemites and the Umayyads rulers, learning and culture prospered respectively in Asia, North-Africa and Spain. From Samrkand and Bokhara to Fez and Cordova, numerous

scholars studied and taught astronomy, mathematics, physics, chemistry, medicine and music. The invaluable treasure of Greek philosophy and learning had been buried under the intolerance and superstition of the Christian Church. Had it not been for the Arabs, it would have been irretrievably lost, and the dire consequence of such a mishap can be easily imagined.

'Vain piety and hypocritical holiness induced the Christians to spurn the science of antiquity as profane. In consequence of that vanity of ignorance, the peoples of Europe were plunged into the medieval darkness which threatened to be bottomless and interminable. The happy resurrection of the divine light of knowledge, lit by the sages of ancient Greece, at long last dissipated the depressing darkness of ignorance and superstition, prejudice and intolerance, and showed the European peoples the way to material prosperity, intellectual progress and spiritual liberation. It was through the Arabian philosophers and scientists that the rich patrimony of Greek learning reached the fathers of modern rationalism and the pioneer of scientific research, Roger Bacon, was a disciple of the Arabs. In the opinion of Humboldt, the Arabians are to be considered 'the proper founders of the physical sciences, in the signification of the term which we are now accustomed to give it'. (*Kosmos*, vol. II). Experiment and measurement are the great instruments with the aid of which they made a path for progress, and raised themselves to a position of the connecting link between the scientific achievements of the Greek and those of the modern time.

'Al-Kandi, al-Hassan, al-Farabi, Avicenna, al-Gazali, Abubakr, Avempace, Al Phetragius. (The Arabian names are so contracted in historical works written in European languages.) These are names memorable in the annals of human culture, and the fame of the great Averroes has been immortalised as that of the man who made the forerunners of modern civilisation acquainted with the genius of Aristotle, thereby giving an inestimable impetus to the struggle of the European humanity to liberate itself from the paralysing influence of theological bigotry and

sterile scholasticism. The epoch-making role of the great Arab rationalist, who flourished in the first half of the twelfth century under the enlightened patronage of the Sultan of Andalusia, is eloquently depicted by the well-known saying of Roger Bacon: 'Nature was interpreted by Aristotle, and Aristotle interpreted by Averroes'.

'The standard of spiritual revolt against the authority of the Christian Church, and the domination of theology, was hoisted in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The rationalist rebels drew their inspiration from the scientific teachings of the great philosophers of ancient Greece, and these they learned from the Arabian scholars, particularly Averroes.

'The remarkable Monotheism of Mohammed made its own the cardinal principles of the religion of those ancient peoples. It stands to the credit of the Arabian philosophers that they, for the first time, conceived the sublime idea of a common origin of all religions. Not only did they hold the view, singularly broad for the epoch, that all religions were so many efforts of the human mind to solve the great mysteries of life and nature, they went so much farther as to make the bold suggestion that the effort more reconcilable with reason was the greater, nobler and sublimer. This rationalistic view of religion attained the highest clarity in the mind of Averroes.

'Although Arabian learning reached its climax in Averroes, he was but the greatest and the latest of a long succession of great thinkers and scholars who flourished from the ninth to the thirteenth century. A brief reference to the substance of the teachings of the more illustrious of them will give some idea of the revolutionary significance of the learning which owed its origin to the cardinal principle of the Mohammed religion, and was promoted by the staggering achievements of the 'Sword of God.'

'Having established unity, as the terrestrial reflection of their spiritual Unitarianism, and promoted economic prosperity in consequence thereof, the new Islamic nation devoted itself to the culture of the mind. For a hundred years, it modestly learned from others, particularly the

ancient Greeks. Thus equipped, it began to produce independent and original thought in every branch of learning.

'Al-Kindi was the earliest of the great Arabian philosophers. He flourished in the capital of the free-thinking Abbasides, and leaped into fame in the beginning of the ninth century for teaching that philosophy must be based on concrete facts and established laws, in order to produce positive results. The teacher of this doctrine deserves the great distinction of having anticipated Francis Bacon and Descartes by seven hundred years as a forerunner of modern philosophy. Even today there are many 'philosophers' and scholars who could be profited by the wisdom taught by the Saracen sage a thousand years ago.

'Next to be mentioned is al-Farabi who lived in the following century, and taught at Damascus as well as Baghdad. His commentary on Aristotle was studied for centuries as an authoritative work on the subject. He also excelled in the medical science. Roger Bacon learned mathematics from him.

"In the latter half of the tenth century appeared Avicenna. He belonged to a rich landowning family of Bukhara engaged in prosperous trade. He wrote on mathematics and physics, but went down in history for his contributions to the medical science.

'The famous medical school of Salerno was a monument to his memory, and his work was the text book of medicine throughout Europe until the sixteenth century. The great physician's philosophical views were so unorthodox that even the free-thinking Emir of Bukhara could not resist the pressure of the Imams who were scandalised by the profanity of Avicenna. He had to leave the court of his patron, and travelled all over the Arabic Empire teaching medicine and preaching his philosophy at different seats of learning.

"In the eleventh century lived al-Hassan who deserves a place among the greatest scientists of all ages. Optics was his special subject. Having learned it from the Greeks, he went farther than they, who corrected their mistaken notion that the rays of light issue from the eye. By anatomical

and geometrical reasoning. Al-Hassan proved that the rays of light came from the object seen, and impinged on the retina. There is ground for belief, held by many historians of science, that Keppler borrowed his optical views from his Arab predecessor.

'In the same century also lived al-Gazali, son of an Andalusian merchant. He anticipated Descartes in reducing the standard of truth to self-consciousness. He stands out as the connecting link between the antique and modern scepticism. His memorable contribution to philosophy is better stated in his own words: 'Having failed to get satisfaction from religion, I finally resolved, to discard all authority, and detach myself from opinions which have been instilled in me during the unsuspecting years of childhood. My aim is simply to know the truth of things. Consequently it is indispensable for me to ascertain what is knowledge? Now, it was evident to me that certain knowledge must be that which explains the object to be known in such a manner that no doubt can remain, so that in future all error and conjecture respecting it must be impossible. Thus, once I have acknowledged ten to be more than three, if any one were to say: On the contrary, three is more than ten; and to prove my assertion I will change this stick into a serpent; and if he actually did the miracle, still my conviction of his error would remain unshaken. His manoeuver would only produce in me admiration for his ability, but I should not doubt my own knowledge'.

'The principle of acquiring exact knowledge, stated nearly a thousand years ago, by the Muslim savant, still holds as good as then, and the scientific outlook which makes such knowledge possible, is still comparatively rare among the Indians, who even in these days of the twentieth century allow themselves to be imposed by feats of magic and 'spiritual' charlatanism, and credit these as serious challenge to the reliability of scientific knowledge.

'Al-Gazali held that knowledge could not possess such mathematical exactness, unless it were acquired empirically, and governed by irrefragible laws established by experience. He was of the opinion that incontestable conviction could

be acquired only through sense perceptions, and necessary truth, that is causality. In reason (self-consciousness), he found the judge of the correctness of the perception of senses.

'One is amased to find such unique boldness of thought in the atmosphere of a religion generally believed to be the most intolerant and fanatical. Yet, al-Gazali's scepticism was avidly studied throughout the Muslim world of his time. His place in the history of philosophy can be judged from the opinion of the famous French Orientalist, Renan, who thought that the father of modern scepticism, Hume, did not say anything more than what had been said by the Arab philosopher who preceded him by seven hundred years. The immensity of the historical significance of al-Gazali's views is appreciated still more clearly when we remember that it was skepticism of Hume which gave impetus to Kant's all shattering critical philosophy that laid a cruel axe at the root of all speculative thought. But al-Gazali's views were a long way ahead of time. Experimental science, as he visualised, was not yet possible. In the absence or infancy of technology, the nature of objects could not be so mathematically ascertained as the philosophers wished. Therefore, in his later years, al-Gazali fell into mysticism; but his fall was not more strikingly inglorious than of Kant. Objective drawbacks clipped the intrepid wings of the soaring spirit of the Arab thinker; whereas, subjective predilection of class interest overwhelmed the critical genius of Kant.

'Abubakr, who lived in the twelfth century, was the first astronomer to reject the Ptolemic notion regarding the position of heavenly bodies. He conceived of a planetary system, and celestial motion which tended towards the epoch-making discoveries of Giordano Bruno, Galileo and Copernicus. It is recorded that 'in his systems all movements were verified, and therefore no error resulted'. Abubakr died before having set forth his theory in a complete treatise. His pupil, Al Phetragius, popularised his teaching that all planetary bodies moved regularly. Throughout the middle ages, the hypothesis was valued as a great contribution to astronomical knowledge. The teachings of a Muslim

philosopher, which upset the biblical view of the Universe, penetrated the Christian monasteries. Not only Roger Bacon, but his illustrious opponent, Albertus Magnus, also acknowledged the indebtedness to the astronomical work of Al Phetragius in which Abubakr's views on planetary movement were expounded.

'The basic principles of the philosophy of Averroes, the greatest and the latest of the great Arabian thinkers, have already been outlined. He lived at the turning point of the history of the Islamic culture. By the twelfth century, the pinnacle had been reached, and the forces of reaction had gathered strength to overwhelm those of progress. Islamic culture was already on the decline.

'The freedom of thought permitted by the simple faith of a nomadic people, had attained such soaring heights of boldness as eventually clashed with the temporal interests of the 'commanders of the Faithful'. When the positive outcome of Islamic thought, developed so marvellously during five hundred years, was summarised in the highly revolutionary dictum of Averroes that reason is the only source of truth, Sultan al-Mansur of Cordova, under the pressure of the priests, issued an edict condemning such heretical views to hell-fire, on the authority of religion. The denunciation of the noblest product of Islam naturally marked the beginning of its degeneration from a powerful lever of human progress to an instrument of reaction, intolerance, ignorance and prejudice. Having played out its historic role to rescue the precious patrimony of ancient culture out of the engulfing ruins of two Empires and the blinding darkness of two religions, Islam turned traitor to its original self, and became the black banner of Turkish barbarism and of the depredations of the Mongolian herds.

'Islam disowned its own. Averroes was driven away from the court of Cordova — the home of free thought for centuries. His books were condemned to the flames, if not actually of fire, to those of the more merciless sacerdotal reaction. Rationalism came to be identified with heresy. The very names of Averroes, his master, Aristotle, became anathema. In course of time, reaction triumphed so completely that for an orthodox Mohammedan, philosophy

stood for 'infidelity, impiety, and immorality'. But the standard of spiritual progress, admirably held high, and boldly carried forward by the Arabs during five hundred years, could not be lowered and trampled under the fury of vain religiosity any more successfully by Islamic intolerance than previously by Christian piety and superstition. Averroes was disowned by his own people, only to be enthroned by those to whom belonged the future. The fierce contest between Faith and Reason, between despotic ignorance and freedom of thought, which rocked Europe and shook the foundation of the Catholic Church from the twelfth century onwards, drew inspiration from the teachings of the Arab philosophers. Averroes and Averroism dominated the scientific thought of Europe for four hundred years.'[6]

References

1. Al-Qur'an (30:30, 31)
2. *Ibid.*, (32:9)
3. Ibrahim Taufic, and Sagdeev Arthur, *op. cit.*, pp. 40.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 109-114.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 221-234.
6. Roy, M.N., *The Historical Role of Islam* (Vohra & Co., Publishers Ltd., Bombay, India) pp. 74-94.

5

Philosophies of Islamic Sufism

Reason — The Composite of Intellect and Intuitive Experience

Intellect is not emotion and so intellect requires emotion to be moved and thus become active. If emotions are good, intellect moves in the right direction and if emotions are bad, it moves in the wrong direction, intellect being neutral to emotions and action. So Reason is different from Intellect and it is a composite of intellect and intuition and hence it is capable of differentiating between Good and Bad.

Intuitive Rapport with Reality — Necessary for Knowledge

When man becomes one with Nature, Nature reveals its secrets to man and when a man becomes one with society i.e. one with other human beings, the personalities of those other human beings get revealed to him and when a man becomes one with his own unconscious self, his real self reveals its secrets to him and the conscious and unconscious levels of his mind get integrated releasing new energy for personal transformation and social reconstruction. Timeless experience expresses itself in the time-oriented space-time world and bcomes responsible for morally lifting

it to a higher level and thus changing History. In this way, God works through human beings.

Entire Universe Exists in God

God is transcendental and immanent. Things of Nature including animals and also all the human beings exist in God as the parts of God. God is infinite. Every atom and every cell and every animal and every human being has got its or his own distinct individuality. God is the greatest personality in which all these sub-personalities exist and this has been the way of God to express His infinitely rich Self through various sub-selves. So when a man becomes one with nature or other human beings or with his own unconscious self, actually he is becoming one with the transcendental centre of God for that much period of time and, therefore, he feels a sort of deep happiness and peace, because he becomes one with the ultimate source of the Universe who is God.

Spiritual Experience Provides Subjective Basis for Objective Scientific Approach

So this experience of becoming one with God is necessary to enable intellect to see Truth and observe the mercy of God spread throughout the Universe. If this spiritual experience is not there, his self will be full of weaknesses, imperfections and ignoble emotions and so his intellect will create rationalisations to justify wrong conclusions and will not be able to know and recognise Truth. Thus he will make false interpretations and will evolve wrong philosophies to explain existential problems of life. The subjective basis of objective and scientific approach is a religious experience. The inner moral strength working behind the objective and scientific method is imparted by religious experience. If it becomes weak, science also collapses and philosophy too.

It was due to this reason, perhaps, that every prophet used to be first a *Wali* and a Sufi and then after some years, he used to be a prophet. Prophet Muhammed (peace be on him) used to go to the cave of Hira to ponder and pray and thus have spiritual experience and reflection over God, Man and the Universe, and the relationship between

them and the meaning and purpose of it. That is why in the Qur'an, we find religion as well as philosophy to guide Man to right belief and right action. According to the Qur'an, the best way to have this spiritual experience of being one with Allah, is to avoid idol worship and sincerely accept Monotheism, i.e. belief in and worship of one God only. Even the idea of God is not God, it is simply an idea and therefore our creation, just as the idea of a table is not table, but simply an idea of the table. The idea of the table exists in our mind while the table is outside. Same is the case with the idea of God. So when we say *La ilaha*, i.e., there is no god, even the idea of God is brushed aside and we pass into thoughtlessness and thus we become one with the transcendental centre of the universe which is God and thus we begin to experience God and it is out of this experience of God that we say *Illa Allah*, i.e. (except) there is one God. Thus we see that the certainty of the belief in one God is expected to spring from spiritual experience and not from pure intellect only. Intellect helps in removing false notions about God but certainty about the existence of God is imparted by experience which becomes possible when opposition to idol worship is carried to its logical conclusion and a person enters into thoughtlessness and becomes one with God or does so through prayers and *Dhikr* (remembrance of God) and by doing good deeds and helping others.

Sufis Emphasised the Importance of Spiritual Experience

Sufis emphasised the importance of this basic aspect of Islam which is experiencing one God and having a belief in one God on the basis of one's own spiritual experience and thereby transforming one's own life into the direction of greater purity in one's own intentions, thoughts and deeds, and then such people coming together and co-operating with one another for reconstructing society on the basis of greater social justice, kindness, sympathy and prosperity for all.

Monotheism Opens the Gateway of Spiritual Experience

Thus, Monotheism if rightly understood and honestly practised, opens the gateway of acquiring spiritual experience and then one can reach higher and higher stages of spiritual progress on this path of Monotheism. In that case, even the theory of *Wahdat al-Wujud* (Unity of Being) of Ibn 'Arabi if rightly understood, is found to be the logical conclusion of Islamic Monotheism.

Moral Values should be Built in the Hearts of Men

If the state is to be neutral towards all religions so that it can work on the common principles of freedom, equality and social justice to all and thus strive for secularism, democracy and equal fundamental rights for all individuals, irrespective of their religion, community, caste, race, creed, sect or sex, the beliefs in these moral and cultural values should be emotionally felt by the individuals in the inner recesses of their minds and hearts and they should become the part of the culture of the people. If any movement for social justice, brotherhood and freedom is to succeed, its foundation must be laid in the minds or hearts of the individuals of that society. Good education, good literature and good art and also alround economic prosperity become lifeless if the driving force of existential spiritualism which can be imparted by Sufism or true religion, is missing. So the importance of Spiritualism and Sufism lies in its capacity to bring about this inner moral and spiritual transformation of the individuals and thus lay the solid foundation for the reconstruction of the society. Without this inner transformation of the individuals, no social movement can succeed. Communism failed because its philosophy of dialectical materialism had no capacity to change the man from within, as it only claimed to explain the reality that was without. So Communist rulers had to appeal to blind nationalism and racialism and that is why in Russia and Yugoslavia, after the collapse of Communism, there have been racial and national civil wars. The same applied to Nazism of Hilter and Fascism of Mussolini, which were based on racial and national hatred.

Contribution of Sufism in the Transformation of Man

But Islamic Sufism played a great historical role in the constructive direction in the past and it can and it should play a very vital, moral and humanitarian role in the present for the betterment of mankind and alround peace and prosperity in the world, if Sufism is now presented in a new garb and with a new terminology and a new approach as required by the needs of the present circumstances.

In the past, prophet Muhammed (peace be on him) and his companions and his other followers brought about individual and social change with the help of pure belief in one God who is Unique in His Self and in His Attributes. With the Logos *(Kalimah)* of 'There is no god but one God' who alone should be worshipped, Islam brought about a spiritual and social revolution and changed human history and laid the foundation of experimental science and rationalist philosophy, as M. N. Roy in his book *Historical Role of Islam*, has nicely pointed out.

Different Theories of Sufism

When Muslims studied Greek philosophy, they were much influenced by the writings of Aristotle and also by the theory of Neoplatonism as developed by Plotinus on the basis of the ideas of Plato — the teacher of Aristotle and a student of Socrates. According to Aristotle, something cannot come out of nothing and so even God cannot create this world out of nothing. Some Indian philosophies postulated eternal matter along with eternal God. Now Muslims, being the believers in pure Monotheism, cannot accept the eternity of Matter, as it compromises with the sovereign power of God and distorts the nature of ultimate Reality. Besides, Aristotle's arguments were right in asserting that nothing can be created out of nothing. So the only philosophy that can be evolved in favour of pure Monotheism was to consider the Universe and Man to be an emanation from God only. In that case, there is no duality or no dual parallel eternal verities of God and Matter or God and the Universe. So the theory of Neoplatonism which provided

ground for belief in such an emanation became popular among Muslim thinkers and sufis. Suhrawardi developed this theory in a more systematic fashion in his own way.

1. *Theory of* Wahdat al-Wujud

But the most comprehensive and the powerful theory came in the form of *Wahdit al-Wujud* (Unity of Being) as developed by Mohiyuddin ibn 'Arabi of Spain who was a great Sufi-philosopher and was considered to be Shaikh al-Akbar. Ibn 'Arabi's theory of *Wahdat al-Wujud* (Unity of Being) is considered to be the fusion of Islamic Monotheism, Indian monism and Greek concept of the Unity of Reality though the element of Islamic Monotheism predominated in the Sufist composite theory. This theory of the Unity of Being was the logical step forward in Islamic Monotheism. In Islam, God is the ultimate Reality. But there is diversity in the world and if pure monotheism is not to be compromised, the diversity or difference can be explained only as the different expressions of the Ultimate Reality which is God.

In Sufism, the chasm or the distance between the Creator and Man was lessened through love of God by Man and God's love for Man which brought about Union of Man with one God. But the theory of *Wahdat al-wujud* absorbed not only Man, but the whole Universe in God and thus showed the Unity of Existence in one God. Thus Islamic God was transcendental as well as immanent. But it was not like Indian Pantheism, but it was panentheism. Ibn 'Arabi clarified that, as the finger or the hand of the man is not man, in the same way, all individual things and all individual human beings are the parts of one God, but nothing or nobody is God. Nothing can survive or exist without being the part of God as we reject the eternity of matter as separate from and independent of the eternity of God. But at the same time the personality of God can be understood and felt only transcendentally. Just as human body consists of many cells and every cell has got its own limited autonomy and the personality of man is separate from the individualities of these cells, in the same way, God's personality is separate from the sub-personalities

of His parts and hence God's personality can be approached only transcendentally as Islam teaches.

2. *Theory of* Wahdat al-Shuhud

As this theory of the Unity of Existence was misunderstood and wrongly used by some Sufis and philosophers and was equated with monism and Indian pantheism which was feared to open the doors of idol worship, Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi developed the theory of *Wahdat al-Shuhud* (Unity of Reflection) (Volume I, Letters 43, 160, 234).

According to this theory of the Unity of Reflection, creation was real to the extent to which it reflected the reality of the creator, i.e. one God who was the ultimate Reality. God was Reality in His essence while the created ones were real to the extent of the degree of reflection of the ultimate Reality of God, by them. The oneness lay in the reflection of the same Reality of God by them, though the degree of reflection by each of them varied and to that extent, the degree of their reality also varied. Thus, the source to be reflected was the same for each of them and there lay the unity, but the degree of reflection of this ultimate Reality of God varied and there lay the diversity or the cause of difference. Thus there was Unity in diversity or Unity in difference.

This theory of the Unity of Reflection also helped like the theory of the Unity of Existence, in solving the cosmological problems and existential problems of life. But the degree of reflection cannot be hundred per cent by anything or anybody. Suppose it is 60 per cent real, but it is 40 per cent unreal. But then the question arises about the nature of this 40 per cent unreal thing. What is it? It must be eternally co-existing with eternal God. So it compromises with the principle of the Unity of God as conceived by Islam.

3. *The Theory of* Wahdat al-Takhliq

So the third theory of the Unity of Creation *(Wahdat al-Takhliq)* was drawn attention to by M. M. Zuhur al-Din Ahmad in his very interesting book on Sufism, *Mystic*

Tendencies in Islam published, in 1932 in India. The whole universe including Man and other creatures are creations by one God Who is the Creator. There is a wide chasm, a distance between the creator and what is created. Creation cannot come on par with the creator. The Unity lies in there being the common creator of all things and all creatures. But nothing or nobody of the creation can be on par or on the level of equality with one God — the Creator. Man is the best creation and he or she is the vicegerent of God in the Universe but, nevertheless, he is the creation of God. So love of God on — the part of Man can unite him emotionally and spiritually with God, but still he maintains his own individuality or personality in the wider personality of God. Man is the best creation of God. Man has got self-consciousness and a sense of separateness of his individuality from the rest of the universe and has got a sense of moral responsibility and the ability to form general concepts which no other creature in the world has got. He is destined to rule over the Universe by following the laws of God and using them for the welfare of all. The whole universe is worshipping God by following strictly the laws of God. Only Man has got the freedom to follow the moral laws of God or not. If he does, he becomes happy in this life and also in the Hereafter, but if he violates the moral laws of God, he becomes unhappy in this world and also in life after death. Man has to worship only one God who is the Creator and not anything or anybody from creation. This means that Man has to be afraid of God only and not of any human being however powerful he may be. So Islam's opposition to idol-worship and its uncompromising monotheism was meant to oppose all kinds of authoritarianism, social injustice, superstitions and narrow mindedness and all kinds of inequality created by man. Islam had changed individual lives and transformed social life with the help of its theory of pure Monotheism which implied the theory of the Unity of Creation.

Maulana Jami in his famous book, *Nafahatul Uns*, has drawn attention to the four concepts of (1) the Unity of Faith, (2) the Unity of Knowledge, (3) the Unity of Ecstasy and (4) the Unity of Existence.

By the Unity of Faith, he means Faith in one God and acceptance of the logos that there is no god but one God who alone should be worshipped. By the second concept of the Unity of Knowledge, he means faith expressed not only through tongue but also felt in the heart of man as a result of which he gets the real knowledge and the conviction that God alone is the source and the cause of all diverse things and changes and movements and actions in the universe. The third Unity which is the Unity of Ecstasy, is in fact the Unity of Reflection and implies the reflection of God in the heart of man in a vivid and a very clear way.

According to Maulana Jami, these concepts indicate the different stages of spiritual realisation by Man. Accordingly, in the third stage, which is spelled by the theory of *Wahdat al-Shuhud*, the heart and personality of man begin to reflect the attributes of God and his actions are moulded accordingly.

The concept of the Unity of Being which has been spelled by the theory of *Wahdat al-Wujud*, actually draws our attention to the highest stage of spiritual experience and realisation when a person sees only the Unity of Being everywhere. Diversities of the universe actually melt into the wider unity of existence of God. He sees God everywhere and in everything and every being. This is the highest stage to which Man can spiritually reach.

Thus the beginning is made with Monotheism, but then it opens the flood gates of spiritual experience and a person passes through higher and higher stages of self-realisation and God-realisation. So there is no conflict between pure Monotheism implying the theory of the unity of Creation *(Wahdat al-Takhliq)* and the theory of the unity of Reflection *(Wahdat al-Shuhud)* and the theory of the unity of Being *(Wahdat al-Wujud)*. They, in fact, express the different stages of spiritual realisaion of a person in the ascending order on the ladder of the spiritual experience of one God, the highest one being that of *Wahdat al-Wujud*.

Muslim Philosophers, consciously or unconsciously, always tried to create synthesis between science, religion

and philosophy. Their commitment with Islam was certain, but their interpretations of Islam were different from those of dogmatic theologians and religious doctors who had specialised in the study of word rather than the spirit working behind the words. Muslim philosophers were strong supporters of the study of science, because the Qur'an itself laid great emphasis on the study of Nature and to see the signs of mercy and providence of God in Nature.

The subject-matter of Logic is the study of the scientific method which is inductive and deductive. So Muslim Philosophers emphasised the importance of the study of logic. Philosophy is an intellectual pursuit and intellect is not an alternative to scientific experience (observation and experiment) or spiritual experience, but intellect does two things:

1. One is to systematise the experience — scientific or spiritual and help in formulating concepts out of this experience; and
2. Second is to show inconsistency between concepts or sense-perceptions or intuition formations, if it is there and thus pave the way for the emergence of consistency and integration of knowledge. Scientific experience gives the knowledge of the external world, while spiritual experience gives the knowledge of the internal world of man and through it, about God and life after death and helps in making man, a better human being. Whenever any man does a good deed, he participates in the wider life of God and the mercy of God descends upon him and he begins to understand the right path, leading to the realisation of God in one's own self. In philosophy, reason examines scientific experience as well as spiritual experience and tries to remove inconsistencies between facts and facts and also between concepts and concepts and between facts and concepts. So all the three fields of knowledge — philosophy, science and religion are necessary as they support one another and thus are found to be complementary in search for truth.

Now we find such an integration of science, philosophy and religion in Ibn 'Arabi's sufist philosophy. So, let us discuss it in some greater detail.

Sufist Philosophy of Ibn 'Arabi

Muslim philosophers were much influenced by the writings of Aristotle and then by those of Plato and Plotinus. So Muslim philosophers in the beginning, were Islamic Aristotelians who had specialised in the study of the works of Aristotle and had been trying to synthesise his philosophy, logic and science with the basic approach and spirit of Islam. Al-Farabi, al-Kindi, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd, Ibn Bajja were the leading Muslim Islamic Aristotelians and philosophers. But some of the philosophers went to the extreme and indulged into highly speculative thought. So Imam Ghazali though opposed to dogmatic theologians and supported scientific attitude as well as Sufism, he opposed the philosophers with great vehemence. On account of Ghazali's powerful theoretical arguments (though not very sound) and due to favourable political circumstances, he succeeded in weakening the hold of philosophers. The loss of touch of philosophy, made Islamic theology more dogmatic, and Sufism formal in some respects. This was a great loss for Islam. Though his purpose was good and his attack on extremely speculative philosophy without having the base in experience, was justified, his total attack on philosophy as such had harmful consequences.

So when Ibn 'Arabi in the beginning of the 13th century wrote his magnum opus *Futuhat-i Makkiyah* (*The Meccan Openings*) and also *Fusus al-Hikam* (Bezels of Wisdom), he wanted to emphasise the importance of Philosophy and Sufism in the light of Islam and wanted to give a coherent and all comprehensive view of the Universe and the place of Man in it in a way which synthesised science, philosophy and religion.

Some Basic Philosophical Questions

When Ibn 'Arabi wrote, he was facing the following philosophical and theological questions:

1. Whether the world is eternal or was created in time by God and how is this to be reconciled with eternal God?
2. Whether a Sufi or a Gnostic can get revelation directly from God or not?
3. What is the role and scope of intellectual freedom in relation to revelation?
4. How to lessen sectarian feuds and religious intolerance as it mars the very spirit and purpose of religion?
5. What is the place of Man in the Universe and what is the purpose or aim of Man's life?

Ibn 'Arabi, a Spanish Sufi Philosopher, should be ranked as one of the greatest philosophers of Mankind. One is amased to observe his all pervading and bold philosophy of the oneness of Being and his convincing answers and solutions to the above-mentioned questions without getting out of the fold of Islam, and actually giving a deeper and more correct meaning of Islam.

The Theory of Oneness of Being — the Logical Conclusion of Islamic Monotheism

According to him, the Qur'an sows the seeds, lays the foundation and so it makes the beginning and shows the way and hence we have to develop ourselves and our knowledge and our sympathy by travelling on this path and going further and forward with the Qur'an rather than backward. So he started with the Islamic Logos *(Kalimah)* that there is no god but one God and carried it to its logical conclusion of there is no being but that of one God.

This was the theory of oneness of Being — *Wahdat al-Wujud*. Thus *Tawhid Uluhi* (theological monism) was developed into *Tawhid Wujudi* (ontological monism). Ibn 'Arabi was a philosopher of being or we may say that he was a philosopher of existentialism.

Islam started denying the plurality of gods, but Ibn 'Arabi ended with denying the plurality of being and emphasised the unity of God encompassing everything and

everybody. The universe was absorbed into one God in his philosophy and so the universe was the part of God and hence the Universe or the World was also eternal as God was eternal. So there was no creation of the world from nothing in time. It was merely the change of the world from one state to another in time and thus it was never creation out of nothing. Because from nothing, nothing comes out. So the universe is the part of God and it implies to be the expression of God. God has limited His own freedom in giving limited freedom to human beings and other parts of the world that exist in God. So God is not only transcendental, but also immanent in all the parts of the world, because they all exist in him.

Monotheism Leading to Ontic Monism

It does not mean that everything is God and so anything can be worshipped. Ibn 'Arabi himself clarifies that just as any part of our body like finger, hand or leg is not ourself, in the same way, no part of the world or no human being is God and so cannot be worshipped, but only one God in the transcendental sense is to be worshipped. So monotheism was not replaced by ontological monism, but it was carried to its logical conclusion and was developed into a peculiar type of ontological monism i.e., monontism, i.e., Ontic monism. Monotheism is the first stage in discovering truth and implies to be the right and the straight path *(Sirat al-Mustaqim)* but when one travels on this right path, he will get *M'arifah* (real knowledge) at a certain stage (*Hal*) and his or her eyes will be opened to the goodness and beauty of ultimate Reality, i.e. one God. *Monontism (Oneness of Being) is monotheism with vengeance and thus it is opposite to pantheism.* God was Being as a whole and so He cannot be defined in terms of anything in the world which are parts and so he cannot be understood by discursive reasoning which is based on Aristotetian syllogistic reasoning requiring the middle term. In understanding the Absolute, we require dialectial reasoning based on intuition which can give the glimpse of the unity of 'opposites'.

The self of God is Unique and so he cannot be defined

by us but He expresses Himself through the different beings so the Universe which implies the expression of the qualities or attributes of God which also are unique but which can be known through only intuition i.e. spiritual experience. the Qur'an talks about meeting with God which is nothing but coming closer to God by intuition and spiritual experience. Actually, every good *(m'aruf)* act imparts man the spiritual experience of God and brings him nearer to God. This is meeting with God.

Kullu Shay fi Kulli Shay

God is *Haqq* (truth) and expression of *Haqq* is through *Khalq* (creatures) and this creation constantly goes on taking place. *Haqq* is the real and the inner and *Khalq* is the phenomenal and the external. The light of God can be seen in every thing of the universe — big or small. It means that God who is all as a whole, dwells in everything, i.e. *Kullu Shay fi Kulli Shay*. Some Sufis formulated it as *al-Kullu Huva* or *Hamah Ust*, i.e. Everything is He.

Haqq is *Tanzih* and *Khalq* is *Tashbih*

Now for transcendentalism of God, the Arabic word 'Tanzih' can be used and for the immanence of God, the word 'Tashbih' can be used, though *Tashbih* literally may mean likeness and so it is not a very appropriate word for immanence. *Tanzih* is absoluteness of God and Ibn 'Arabi calls it *Itlaq* while *Tashbih* represents worldly things which are limited and relative and Ibn 'Arabi calls it *Taqyid*. According to Ibn 'Arabi, God is *Haqq* from the point of view of *Tanzih* and he is *Khalq* from the point of view of *Tashbih*. But through intuitive experience, the sufi gnostic sees *Tanzih* in *Tashbih* and *Tashbih* in *Tanzih*. Reason adumbrated by spiritual experience takes the form of dialectical reasoning which can conceive and see the real unity of apparent opposites and recognise the transcendentalness and immanence of God in the expanding universe as the expression of God.

Fana and *Baqa* in Allah

In sufistic terminology, there is *fana* (loss or absorption)

of human individuality in the Personality of God, but then there is *Baqa* (permanence) of human personality also in the wider personality of God. Ibn 'Arabi has developed the theory of the ever new creation by God and so in the evolutionary or the revolutionary process, there is *fana* as well as *baqa*, i.e. the old form disappears and then it reapears in a new form with new qualities at a higher stage. *Fana* represents the phenomenal aspect of the world which is to disappear and the *Baqa* is the real aspect of the self or the essence of God, i.e. *Haqq*.

Absolute Unity and Plural Unity

The absolute unity without any trace of plurality was called *Ahadiya* while potential plural unity was called *Wahidiya*. Thus the sufist scheme of the process of emanation or epiphany was conceived as follows by Ibn 'Arabi and his followers:

1. Divine essence *(Dhat)* or absolute unity *(Ahadiya)*.
2. The plural unity *(Wahidiya)*.

The plural unity consisted of the world of noumenal essences which had their own respective individual spheres of action and hence of their own freedom.

Theory of Perfect Man *[Al-Insan al-Kamil]*

Ibn 'Arabi and his followers had a theory of the Perfect Man or *al-Insan al-Kamil*. It is one of the following three categories.

1. God is the absolute Being *(Wujud-i Mutlaq)* which exists on His own accord and He is the source of all other beings which are again His own parts.
2. The second category is that of the phenomenal world which consists of limited beings *(Wujud-i Muqayyad)*.
3. The third category is that of human beings who possess something of the spirit of the Absolute and something of the phenomenal world.

Good Teacher — Necessary for Moral Upliftment

But as the Qur'an declares that Man is born on the

best essence and he is born on the nature of God and God has breathed from His Spirit into him. So, man is basically good, according to the Qur'an, but he is created weak also as the Qur'an says and human life is full of difficulties also despite the providence and mercy of God surrounding him from all directions. So man requires guidance and guidance of a good teacher can help him in travelling on the path to which his own moral conscience leads. It is said in sufist literature that a man who has not got a good teacher, Satan (Devil) is his mentor.

But in the beginning with the guidance and help of a good teacher and afterwards with firm determination, man with great efforts can attain to higher and higher stages of self-realisation and God-realisation if his vision is clear and the path is right *(Sirat al-Mustaqim).*

Man is the best creation of God in the Universe. The Qur'an describes Man as the vicegerent (*Khalifa*) of God on earth.

The concept of *al-Insan al-Kamil* — the perfect man was first conceived and introduced by Ibn 'Arabi in the literature of Islamic Sufist Philosophy. The essence of the whole phenomenal world was concentrated in Man and not only Man realised God through realising himself, but God also realised Himself, through His best creation Man. Man was the reflection of God. Muhammad Iqbal also derived his philosophy of God being the Greatest Ego and human beings being the sub egos as a part and parcel of this Greatest Ego (self) of God from the sufist philosophy of Ibn 'Arabi. Iqbal's philosophy of self *(Khudi)* and Qalandar owe, its great debt to Ibn 'Arabi's philosophy of *Wahdat al-Wujud* and that of *al-Insan al-Kamil* (Perfect man who is like the Qalandar of Iqbal). In *Fusus al-Hikam*, Ibn 'Arabi clarified this important point of his philosophy which can be summarised as follows:

Al-Haqq and *Kawn* — Unity in Plurality and Plurality in Unity

God *(al-Haqq)* burned with a desire (unlike the desire of Man or any other creature) to see his innumerable

beautiful names expressed and embodied in all encompassing reality i.e. *Kawn*, through which He wanted to disclose His secret i.e. *Sirr* for Himself. The World is like an unpolished mirror and Man or Adam is the polishing of the mirror which reflects the attributes *(Sifat)* of God. Everything of the Universe reflected a separate aspect or a separate name of God. All the things of the Universe taken together as a whole, represented God's awareness of Himself. But without man, the Universe was like an unpolished mirror. But the appearance of Man (who is like a polished mirror) at a certain stage of evolutionary creation completed the potential unity of the world. There was the synthesis of all divine epiphanies in Man. Only Man could be consciously aware of the wholeness and the unity of the Universe. God contemplates Himself through the self of *al-Insan al-Kamil*. A real sufi is a *Wali* who has got *Ma'rifah* (knowledge of God and relationship of Man with God). Such a gnostic, through his personality and good *(m'aruf)* deeds expresses the Absolute Self of God. The Sufi, the *Wali* or the gnostic attains this high stage of *wilaya* by passing successfully through the following four stages or journeys.

1. Removal of the phenomenal veil of unity of plurality from the face of Unity;
2. Removal of the veil of unity from the face of conceivable and understandable plurality.
3. Attainment of non-dualistic unity.
4. Seeing and realising unity in plurality and plurality in unity.

Different Stages of Spiritual Knowledge

A Sufi travels from *Shariat* to *Haqiq'at* through *Tariqat*. Relying on the verses of the Qur'an, Sufis take into account three stages of *Yaqin* (sense of certainty) based on the three stages of spiritual knowledge *(Ma'rifat)* namely (1) *Ilm al-Yaqin* (certitude through information), (2) *'Ayn al-Yaqin* (certitude through seeing), (3) *Haqq al-Yaqin* (certitude based on the unity of the subject with the object). If we take the example of fire, then the information or knowledge through other sources or inference (like smoke)

that fire burns, then it is *'Ilm al-Yaqeen.* When we see by our eyes that fire burns then it is 'Ayn' means the eye and so it is certitude acquired through seeing. But if we touch fire and feel the burning sensation, then it is 'Haqq al-Yaqeen', i.e. it is certitude based on ultimate truth. In ultimate truth, there is all Unity, a person becomes one with God and he or she begins to experience God. So when he or she speaks, then it is God who speaks through him or her and whatever he or she does, it is God who is working through him or her. He becomes one with God transcendentally and immanently and so the whole world moves with him or her and he or she becomes responsible for the change of human history. When attention is drawn towards the signs of God in Nature, that is seeing *Khalq* in *Haqq*. But when a sufi gets spiritual experience and begins to see the immanence of God in everything that is seeing *Haqq* in *Khalq*. But here he still differentiates between *Haqq* and *Khalq*. This is seeing unity in diversity. But at a still higher stage, according to the theory of Unity of Being *(Wahadat al-Wujud)*, there is all unity, there is only *Haqq* and no *Khalq*. He sees only *Haqq* every where. So he becomes very tolerant of other views and becomes a friend of his enemies also. This implies the feeling of identification with *Haqq* or one God. This is *Fana fi-Allah* and also *Baqa bi-Allah*. That is, the sufi-gnostic loses himself in the Absolute, but he becomes stronger in his self by becoming one with God and so he dwells in the wider Personality of God and thus maintains his personality and identity in a more precise and definitive way, as he derives strength and energy from the greatest source of all energy and strength i.e. God.

Theory of Noumenal Essences

Ibn 'Arabi also developed the theory of Noumenal essences. Ibn 'Arabi refuted the theory of the theologians that God created the world out of nothing or non-being. Ibn 'Arabi made a distinction between *Wujud-i Ilmi* and *Wujude-i 'Ayni* and God turned understandable and conceivable beings of *Wujud-e Ilmi* into concrete beings of *Wujud-i 'Ayni.* So the universe is the part of God and hence

it is eternal and the expression of God (which some call, creation) is constantly going on.

In the Qur'an, it is said:

'God created and then gave shape to every created thing and then He gave measurement to everything and guided it'[4]. It is due to this measurement given to everything that everything moves and behaves in its own distinct way. As for example, the sun and the moon move in their own orbits and the other stars also do the same. Each animal, each bird and each insect also behaves in its own distinct way. So God's freedom gets limited by the inherent modes of behaviour implanted by God in the noumenal essences of all things. But it is self-determination by God Himself of His own free will. That is why a poet has sung that let him take wine (of the love of God) in the mosque itself or he should be shown the place where God is not there.

Problem of Freedom and Necessity

Ibn 'Arabi has dealt with the problem of freedom and necessity also. Karl Marx and Engels had said that freedom is the appreciation of necessity. According to Ibn 'Arabi, freedom is the absence of external compulsion. Everything, every-being including Man has its or his own nature and only Man has free choice (of course in a limited way). If he acts in consonance with his nature or essence, he gets or experiences real freedom. It is through spiritual experience, intuitive experience that a person experiences his basic unity with God and thereby he participates in the wider life of God and participates in the symphony and the music of the universe. At his stage, he acquires real freedom.

Slavery is dependence on external factors. Everything except the essence or the nature of man, was slavery for him. Inorganic things had the greatest degree of slavery and the least degree of freedom. Plants had less slavery and more freedom, animals had still less slavery and Man had still less slavery and more freedom. But when a person does good actions which are universally acclaimed as good deeds (as *M'aruf* deeds according to the Qur'an), he acts according to his essence which is God-implanted basic

nature and so he gets utmost freedom. There is no external compulsion at all. Following the voice of one's own conscience, leads Man to full freedom according to Ibn 'Arabi.

Religious Pluralism and Universalism of Ibn 'Arabi

There were two other important contributions of Ibn 'Arabi in the Islamic philosophy of Religion. (1) He believed that according to the the Qur'an, Hell is not eternal, but temporary for every human being, Muslim as well as non-Muslim, and (2) every non-Muslim, is not necessarily a *Kafir* and any Muslim or non-Muslim if he or she is sincere in his or her actions and does good deeds for their own sake without any expectation of worldly gain, he or she will get a good reward in this world as well as in the Hereafter. God is so merciful that he will ultimately pardon the sins of all human beings irrespective of their religion. Of course, a person — Muslim or a non-Muslim, will feel the mental fire or torture for a shorter or longer time, according to the degree of his or her misdeeds and *Niyat* or purpose and then they all will, sooner or later, be relieved from this fire, thus being cleansed from the bad effects of bad deeds and now they will enter into paradise which also implies a situation of action and movement.

Ibn 'Arabi preached religious pluralism and believed that there were as many ways to truth as there are individuals and every individual had the right to follow his own path. Some path may be longer and some may be shorter, but ultimately all paths lead to Truth, if one is sincere in his efforts to find truth and continues to do good deeds.

In *Fusus al-Hikam*, Ibn 'Arabi points out that the straightness of an equilateral triangle lies in its having three equal angles, the straightness of an isosceles triangle lies in its having two identical sides, the straightness of a bow lies in its curvature, the straightness of a plant lies in its vertical movement and of the animals in horizontal movement. Thus everything had its own specific path and in it lay its straightness which has been predetermined by God. Thus according to Ibn 'Arabi, all religions and creeds were true in their intents.

Here we may say that Ibn 'Arabi gives more importance to sincere purposes leading to good actions rather than to external forms of worship. So surface beliefs are not to be taken seriously, but the purity of one's heart and his good deeds emanating from it and his abstaining away from bad deeds of injustice, cruelty, violence, cheating, telling lies etc. are more important and a greater deciding factor rather than formal and surfacial beliefs in determining the fate of man in terms of real happiness, mental peace and all round bliss.

References

1. Ahmad, M.M. Zuhurudddin, *Mystic Tendencies in Islam* (Low Price Publications, Delhi, India) pp. 176-186.
2. Ibrahim, Taufic and Sagdeev, Arthur, *op. cit.*, pp. 307-342.
3. Al-Qur'an (87:2.3).

6

Stages of Spiritual Progress in Islam

Without understanding the basic Islamic philosophy of Religion, Islam cannot be properly understood. Islam is not law, but it is a movement for the moral transformation of the individual and the consequent establishment of peace, prosperity and true happiness for all human beings in the world. Its psychological and philosophical approach is existential.

In the 8th and 9th centuries A.D. along with the military victories of Muslims, internal feuds and fights among Muslims for the attainment of power and money had increased. There was the great impact of Greek philosophy also on the Muslim intellectuals and, on the other hand, the theologians had made Islam only a conglomeration of laws about which they differed among themselves giving rise to various schools of Islamic Jurisprudence though the leaders and pioneers of these schools were very pious, honest and learned persons, but their follower — theologians created problems. In this situation, the main goal of Islam to have the moral development of the individuals and to base the social structures on social justice, freedom and equality was missed to a considerable extent. So the spirit of Islam revolted and took the form of Sufi movement which

primarily aimed at the purification of the individual human self *(Tadkiya al-Nafs)*. The base of Sufi movement is in the Qur'an. Sufism is going back to the real Islam. Because it directly deals with the aim of human life and draws our attention to the true and basic philosophy of Islam.

Stages of Spiritual Development of Man in the Qur'an

Scholars and the Sufis draw our attention to three types of human consciousness which have been mentioned in the Qur'an. Human self *(Nafs)* is described according to its stage of spiritual development like *al-Nafs al-Ammarah* (Evil self), *al-Nafs al-Lawwamah* (Accusing self) and *Naf al-Mutma'innah* (satisfied or balanced or peaceful self).

As mentioned in the Qur'an, every human being is born on the nature of God and God has breathed of His spirit in every human self and so potentially every person is basically good, but as man is created weak, he many times, condescends to being bad and becoming an evil. There is a saying of Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) also that 'every child is born as a Muslim, but his parents make him belong to one faith or another'. Here by being born as a Muslim, it is meant that every human child is born on the nature and spirit of God and ultimately the parents make him belong to this or that community like Christian Community, Jewish Community, Muslim Community or Hindu Community, etc.

In the Qur'an, three stages of the condition of the human self have been described which we explain below.

(a) *Al-Nafs al-Ammarah(Evil Self)*

Generally most of the people are found to be at the stage of *Nafs al-Ammarah* i.e. the evil self and so with the help of belief in one God and in the hereafter and by doing good deeds helpful to other human beings, a person can purify himself or herself and rise to a higher stage of *Nafs al-Lawwamah* (Accusing self).

(b) *Al-Nafs al-Lawwamah (Accusing Self)*

Here the real self of a person which is pure, becomes

predominant and subdues the evil passions and evil thoughts. Human self's sense of distinction between good and evil deeds and passions becomes very sharp and it endeavours ceaselessly and strongly to remain away from evil and pursue whole-heartedly good deeds and deeds of human service. A person's love and faith in God is found to be very powerful at this stage. If he continues to struggle on this right path *(Serat al-Mustaqeem)*, he soars higher and higher spiritually and the grace of God descends completely on him and he or she reaches the third stage of Nafs al-Mutmainnah.

(c) *Nafs al-Mutma'innah (Satisfied Self)*

This is poised self, balanced self or the satisfied self. It is the result of the grace of God which descends on a person when he persistently struggles against evil within himself and also without in the society and he always thanks God that He was kind enough to show him the right path *(Serat al-Mustaqeem)* and to give him spiritual strength to be steadfast in thought and deeds thus treading on the right path.

Nafs al-Mutma'innah indicates a completely satisfied self. Such a person never gets tired or disappointed of the mercy of God despite the worst circumstances through which he may be passing. He makes all efforts to succeed spiritually and materially and then resigns himself completely to the Will of God and accepts whatever is decreed by God for him. He does not complain, he simply prays for change and accepts the decreed lot, because he has got faith that, whatever, God will decide and select for him, it must be the best for him though at that stage, he may not be able to see clearly that it may, prove to be a blessing in disguise in future, though it may look to be a calamity in the present. At this stage, a person's self-realisation and God-realisation is of a very high order. He feels great peace in his mind. When such a person dies, even God welcomes him in the Paradise. About such persons, the Qur'an says the following:

"Allah is well-pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him"[1]. Also, "O tranquil soul! Return to thy Lord, well pleased (with Him), well pleasing (to Him)."[2]

Stage of Spiritual Experience as Described in the Qur'an

Iman (Faith) is conscious or/and unconscious conviction about the truth of God or the validity of the absolute moral values of life which actually express the *Sifat* or the Attributes of God. Seeker of Ultimate Reality, (i.e. God) may be described as passing through two stages and ultimately reaching the third highest stage of *Iman* or that of conviction of Truth. Third stage, a person reaches by progressing in the levels of spiritual experience, and the knowledge and wisdom derived from it.

Ilm al-Yaqeen, *'Ain al-Yaqeen* and *Haqq al-Yaqeen*

There are three stages of conviction of Truth as mentioned in the Qur'an.

1. *Ilm al-Yaqeen* i.e. Stage of conviction derived through knowledge;
2. *'Ain al-Yaqeen* — conviction of Truth derived through seeing it; and
3. *Haqq al-Yaqeen* — conviction of Truth derived through complete and integrated spiritual experience by the whole self of the seeker or a gnostic—

   (i) *'Ilm al-Yaqeen* (conviction through inferential knowledge).

   The first stage is that of inferential knowledge i.e. indirect knowledge and so it does not give much certainty about the ultimate Reality.

   (ii) *'Ain al-Yaqeen* (conviction Through Seeing)

   Instead of reading from a book or hearing from an authority, if a person sees a thing by his naked eyes, his conviction about the Truth of a thing grows stronger. So at this stage, a person feels the conviction or the certainty of the reality of God as if he sees Him by his naked eyes. This is spiritual seeing and not physical seeing. Seeing is a kind of experience. So, from inferential knowledge which is indirect, he or she now comes to

the stage of direct knowledge of ultimate Reality which is of one God.

(iii) *Haqq al-Yaqeen* (Conviction through Integral Spiritual Experience by the complete Self of the Seeker)

At this stage, a person becomes completely one with ultimate Reality. This stage can be compared with the stage of *Fana fi-Allah wa Baqi bi-Allah*. A person loses himself in God, but he does not lose his individuality in the wider personality of God, on the contrary, his personality becomes stronger by becoming one with God. So he loses his self in God in order to rediscover it in a purer and more enlightened and stronger form. When he surrenders himself completely to God, his self-experiences the self of God in an integrated fashion and he or she reaches the highest stage of conviction of the ultimate Truth i.e. of God.

At this stage, there is no doubt in his mind and his conviction is so strong about the ultimate Reality that he is perfectly prepared to sacrifice his life and property and everything for the sake of Truth. He prays to God by serving mankind and other creatures selflessly without any expectation of worldly reward and only for the sake of seeking the pleasure of God.

Some Sufis compare the first stage with *Shari'a*, the Second stage with *Tariqah* and the third stage with *Haqiqah*.

Modern man perhaps sees God nowhere but the Sufi sees God everywhere. This is because the modern man misses the spiritual dimension while for a Sufi the spiritual dimension is the main dimension.

The Stages of Spiritual Experience as Mentioned in Hadith

There is a saying of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) that when you pray or do any deed, do them as if you are seeing God and if you cannot feel to be that, think

and feel that God is seeing you and watching your actions. When you sincerely feel that God is watching your deeds, you are on a high spiritual stage. But when you act and behave or try to behave with the spiritual feeling as if you are seeing God, you reach a higher stage of spiritual experience of God. Feeling the presence of God everywhere within and without is the essence of Sufism. Thus, we find the roots of Sufism to be there in the Qur'an and Hadith themselves which is natural also. Prophet Muhammed was the greatest Sufi and the greatest prophet. He was the first Sufi of Islam. His companions also had sufist leanings.

Stages of Spiritual Experience in Sufi Literature[3]

Different sufis have described the different stages of spiritual experience differently. There are some common categories and hence some main ones have been described briefly below.

Three Stages according to Abu Yazid Bistami and others:

1. *Expression of Love of God Through Human Service*

   The first stage is that of service of other fellow human beings. Because it is through service of mankind that you express your love for God. Thus the abstract unity of the Divine Being is made concrete and pulsating with life by being translated into the love of God which is expressed through love and service of human beings.

2. *Cleansing of the Heart from Evil Things*

   The second stage is that of watching one's self closely and purifying one's heart of evil thoughts and feelings and evil deeds so that human heart becomes clean and capable of reflecting the glory and the light of the self of God.

3. *Becoming one with God*

   When a person remains away from evil deeds and bad thoughts and does good deeds which are helpful to the poor and the needy people and thus goes on purifying one's self morally and spiritually for a long time, then he reaches the third stage of

seeing God only everywhere. His heart now pulsates with the heart of God only. Thus the grace of God descends on him when he engages in the second stage for a long time and he enters into the third stage of becoming one with God and thereby developing a stronger ethical, humanitarian and rational personality which is the aim of life.

Of course, progress through all the three stages is made possible by the grace of Allah and the grace of Allah descends on a person who does good deeds, avoids bad deeds and is very meek and kind-hearted. Of course, he cannot serve mankind unless his heart is pure. So certain leading Sufis like Abdul Qadir Jilani and others actually reverse the order of these three stages.

According to them, (1) a person should try to become one with God spiritually so that (2) his heart becomes pure and clean of evil thoughts and evil deeds and (3) then he may be asked to serve mankind when he is in a better position and has a moral and psychological capacity to serve mankind without any moral lapses and only for seeking the pleasure of God. (al-Shaikh 'Abd al-Qadir Jilani—Al-Fathur - Rabbani Sermon-26).

Here the order is reversed. But actually all the three stages in the first category or the first classification and the second one, move together simultaneously, of course with different and changing degrees. *In short, what is required of a Sufi is intense love of God, purification of heart and service to other human beings and other creatures. That is how the principle of the abstract unity of Divine Being becomes concrete and operative in human life and universe.*

(b) Modes of Mind of a Sufi as Emphasised by Al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina and Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi

They have described three modes of mind like (1) Intense feeling of wonder and bewilderment when a person goes beyond the perceptible world and sees the beauty and excellence of the imperceptible one, (2) feeling of insignificance of one's self and (3) the feeling of oneness with God as

he travels and progresses on the ladder of spiritual experience.

(i) *Feelings of Wonder at Entrance into the Limitless World of the Infinite*

In the first stage, a Sufi goes beyond the finite world and enters into the world of the Infinite. From the world of limitations, he enters into the world of the limitless and therefore the feelings of wonder and surprise overtake him and at this stage of experience, he may utter words which cannot be properly understood by the masses and by the theologians.

(ii) *Stage of Loss of one's Self (Fana) into the Self of God*

He enters into a second stage of self-negation or self-annihilation or losing one's self in the self of God when he compares the infinity of God with the insignificance of his own self. So there is losing *(Fana)* of one's self into the wider personality of God Who is infinite.

(iii) *Stage of Living in God (Baqi bi-Allah)*

This self effacement is not the last stage, it is meant for entering into the third stage of remaining and subsisting and living with God in God *(Baqi bi-Allah)* so that there is self-renewal at a higher stage. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal in his foreword to Nicholson's translation of his *Asrar-i Khudi (Secrets of Self)* into English, writes that "In Islamic Sufism, it is not like this that the finite loses itself into the Infinite, but rather the Infinite passes into the loving embrace of the finite".

Thus, in Islamic Sufism, losing of one's self into the infinite self of God, is meant to strengthen one's self by bathing and thereby losing one's self into the love of God. *So self-effacement is not the ultimate aim, but it is an inter-mediary stage for reaching a higher stage of self-affirmation and self-regeneration and self-realisation with spiritual dimensions.*

Thus in accordance with the three stages, there are

three corresponding modes or conditions of selfhood, namely, (1) Surprise and Bewilderment (2) Self-Effacement: and (3) Self-Regeneration at a higher level.

Buddhist *Nirvana* takes one to the stage of self-effacement, but light is not thrown on what happens in that stage. Islamic Sufism throws abundant light on that stage and shows that it results into the affirmation of renewed self at a higher level. It is an attainment of perpetual existence after passing through the stage of self-effacement. Hafiz Shirazi has said:

'One whose heart has become alive with the Love (of God), never dies,

Our eternal existence is engraved for ever on the Register of the World'.

At a later stage, it was insisted by some sufis that before reaching the stage of oneness with God, one has to first become one with the Shaikh or the *Murshid* who is the guide and then in the subsequent stage, he has to become one with Prophet Muhammad. Then in the third stage, he is enabled to become one with God. Thus in the beginning, a seeker has to surrender to the Shaikh and do what he says, as his own understanding in this matter in the beginning, is limited. Then he has to follow the life of Prophet Muhammad completely and behave and do deeds in the light of the sayings and deeds of Prophet Muhammad and merge his personality in that of Prophet Muhammad, as he is the greatest of all guides. Then in the third stage, he has to merge his personality completely with God. Shaikh and Prophet Muhammad and becoming one with them are important because they lead to God. Many sufis do not agree with these three stages of self-effacement. Imam Al-Ghazali, Shah Waliullah, Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi and other leading Sufi thinkers do not agree with this threefold programme of self-effacement. Surrendering to God directly is the best way of becoming one with God, of course, with the help of the guidance given by the Murshid and derived from the life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him).

(c) *Quality-wise Classification of the Stages of Spiritual Experience*

Certain qualities of the mind and the heart have been emphasised by the Sufis with a view to reach higher and higher stages of spiritual experience.

Qualities of Patience, Ecstasy, Resignation And Obedience

All the good qualities emphasised by the Sufis can be subsumed under four most important qualities of Patience, Ecstasy, Resignation and Submission.

(i) *Patience*

Patience, i.e. *Sabr* according to the Qur'an and Hadith, means doing good and right deeds and saying the truth and facing all the consequences for doing so with the calm and cool mind. Evil has to be resisted and all its consequences born calmly i.e. with patience. But there is evil or devil within also as it is without. So to fight the evil within one's own self and trying to bring under control one's baser passions is also Jehad. According to the sufis, fighting the devil within, implies *Jehad-e Akbar* i.e. the greatest Jehad or greatest struggle or exertion. This requires *Dhikra*, i.e. remembrance of God and contemplation of God. Practice of Patience ultimately results into Ecstasy for the Sufi.

(ii) *Ecstasy*

Ecstasy is gnosis through which God bestows divine knowledge on the Sufi truth-seeker. Ecstasy is achieved through practising patience and trying to lose one's self in the divine love of God. In certain *Tariqas* or orders (like the Chishti order), help of music is also taken to reach the stage of Ecstasy which imparts divine knowledge. *(Ma'rifah).*

(iii) *Resignation*

In the state of Ecstasy, the Sufi emotionally loses himself into God and becomes intoxicated with the love of God. In this condition, it becomes very easy

for him to resign completely to the Will of God. Whatever befalls on him in this life, however bitter and unpalatable it may be, is willingly accepted by him as God's decree. Death of the near ones, illness, economic hardships, political and social persecution can be borne patiently and the state of ecstasy maintained only if there is complete resignation by the sufi to the Will of God or what God chooses for him or for her. Our life and the lives of our near and dear ones and our health and our property — all are the gifts of God to us. So just as He was kind enough to bestow all these gifts on us, he may as well withdraw them. But He being essentially merciful, whatever He does, He does it for our good and so it is always in our long-term interests. A Sufi works with the spirit of such a belief.

(iv) *Submission*

Resignation implies or leads to the complete submission to the Will of God. But this submission by a sufi is the result of a conscious decision by him and it is also the submission not to blind Nature, but to active intelligent and merciful God. So this conscious submission is active surrendering to the Will of God and not acceptance of passive fatalism.

(d) *Stages According to Spiritual Excellences*

Progressive Stages of spiritual experience have been described in terms of attainment of spiritual excellences also in Sufi literature. In this respect, the book *Mystic Tendencies in Islam* written by Mr. M.M. Zuhuruddin Ahmad is very useful from the point of view of analysis and information. It is like a textbook on the subject of Sufism though I do not agree with the approach of the learned writer regarding Sufism.

In sufi scheme of self realisation and God-realisation, heart i.e. *Qalb* is at the centre. But it is not the physical heart that is meant. By 'heart', it is meant the all pervading moral and spiritual faculty in Man which is based on the

transcendental experience of God by the self of man. Thus heart is the moral and spiritual centre of the human self which reflects the glory, light and the reality of God. Man's personality is strengthened through the development of this moral and spiritual faculty which is made possible by passing through the following seven progressive spiritual stages.

1. *Waquf-e Qalbi* (Watching the Heart)
2. *Waquf-e Adadi* (Watching the Number)
3. *Waquf-e Zamani* (Watching the Time)
4. *Yad-Dasht* (Remembrance)
5. *Baz-Gasht* (Retirement)
6. *Nigah-Dasht* (Carefulness)
7. *Khud-Guzasht* (Forgetfulness).

These seven stages of spiritual progress of the Heart towards infinite God are called *Lataef-e Qalbi* (spiritual excellences). Let us clarify them briefly one by one.

Waquf-i Qalbi

In this stage of watching one's heart, a person concentrates his attention on one's own self and does *Dhikr* or remembrance of God by repeatedly uttering the names of the attributes and the self of God or some formula made out of them and taught by his guide for regular remembrance.

Waquf-i Adadi

Etymologically, it means watching the number, but its full meaning lies in uttering a certain name of Allah for a definite number of times within one breath. If a person practising it, can do the *Dhikr* i.e. repeating the name of God minimum twenty-one times, but may be more in one breath, then he becomes as if capable of transcending the Number and becoming as if independent of space. Number represents separation of integral Reality. Science and intellect grasp the Reality in a piecemeal way. But the best way is to rise above number i.e. above this piecemeal division of Reality and thus open the way of Ecstasy and intuition

which can grasp the Reality as a whole in an integral fashion.

Waquf-i Zamani

Now comes a higher stage of *Waquf-i Zamani.* Here, he is taught by his guide certain practices of having some sort of mental visions which after sometime, enable him to conceive things beyond the limitation of time. Thus he rises above time. In the previous stage, he had risen above Number and now he rises above Time.

Yad-Dasht

When a person rises above number and time, he becomes fit for traversing through the fourth stage of realising God within one's own self. This remembrance of God is not like that of the first stage, it is real remembrance of God within one's own heart. He sees and remembers only God everywhere and every time.

Baz-Gasht

This is the stage of Retirement from worldly attachments. It does not necessarily mean leaving the material world, but actually it means the removal of attachment to the worldly things of life, though one may live in the midst of them.

Nigah-Dasht

Now extreme carefulness is necessary after passing through the fifth stage and has to make efforts to retain that stage. This is the stage before the final stage and the final stage being that of forgetfulness of everything except God and losing one's self into the wider self of God, it is wisely advised to the gnostic to be very much careful.

Khud-Guzasht

This is the stage of Forgetfulness i.e. a person forgets every thing and everybody except God. This is preparing for the losing of one's self into the self of God. This is *Fana fi-Allah*, i.e. self effacement in God which leads to

Baqi bi-Allah, i.e. subsisting in the wider personality of God with self-renewal and self-regeneration at a higher level.

(e) *Another Scheme of Classification of stages of Spiritual Experience*

In another Sufi Scheme of spiritual experience, there are the following seven stages.

(i) *Hosh dar Dam* (Consciousness in breathing)

(ii) *Nazar bar Qadam* (Carefulness in movement)

(iii) *Safar dar Watan* (Movement in residence)

(iv) *Khilwat dar Anjuman* (Aloofness in society)

(v) *Dawam-e Aqali* (Perpetuity of consciousness).

(vi) *Muhasibat-i Nafs* (Accountability of consciousness)

(vii) *Baqa dar Fana* (Permanence in self-effacement in Allah).

Let us explain them briefly one by one.

1. *Hosh dar Dam*

In this first stage, the seeker of *Haqq* (Truth), i.e. of God should remain consciously aware of the reality of God in his every breath. He should be conscious that his or her creator is Allah and he is his creation. He should feel that he perpetually lives in God at every moment and he should try that no moment passes without his being conscious of the feeling of oneness with the Infinite.

2. *Nazar bar Qadam*

In the second stage, with the constant awareness of the presence of God, the seeker, in the second stage, begins to improve his deeds. He does good deeds and remains away from bad deeds. In the second stage, he endeavours to act in accordance with the Will of the Infinite while in the first stage; he tried to remain constantly aware of the Immortal Infinite. The first stage is that of consciousness while the second stage is that of action for the seeker.

In the first stage, he lived in God and thought of God only, in the second stage, he works for God, after God and in God. Thus he works in the world for God only.

3. *Safar dar Watan*

In this third stage, the seeker of God detaches himself from land. *Safar* or travel is psychological and spiritual. So he lives in a certain place on land, but there is no mental attachment to it. *Watan* not only includes land, but all material and worldly things of life. The different stages of spiritual path are the stages of psychic and spiritual maturity. God is non-spatial, non-material and spiritual. So the seeker tries to be one with God by dissociating himself from all material, spatial and worldly things of life. Attachment to land has been compared with infantile psychic fixation by Erich Fromm in his famous book *Psychoanalysis and Religion*. Here we observe that the Sufist spiritual path was the path of psychic and spiritual maturity which was developed under the influence of Islam much earlier than the attention to the importance of psychic detachment to land for gaining psychic maturity was drawn by modern psychoanalysis as developed by Sigmund Freud, neo-Freudians and specially by the existential psychoanalyst Erich Fromm. This psychic independence is necessary for rising above group feeling in order to seek Truth and realise it in an unbiased and objective way.

4. *Khilwat dar Anjuman*

In the fourth stage, he not only dissociates himself from land and all material things, but he gets himself detached from the worldly life, all relatives and friends and gets himself bereft of the love of all in order to be full of love for God only. In this condition, he may see God dwelling in everything and everybody including his relatives and friends. But this is a different thing and he is ready to sacrifice his love for all his close and distant relatives and friends for the love of God. He is full of love of God and so there is no room for the love of anybody else or anything else. Of course, he may have love for them through the

eye of the love for God. Even though you are in the society in the midst of all, you are not attached to them and you are lost in the love of God.

5. *Dawam-i Agahi*

After passing through the four stages, the seeker *(Salik)* comes to the fifth stage of having perpetual consciousness of God only. For twenty-four hours of the day, he thinks of God, utters praise for God and works for God only and ever lives for God and if necessary, dies for God.

6. *Muhasibat-i Nafs*

After passing through five stages, in the sixth stage, the human conscience becomes fully awake and the seeker clearly hears the voice of conscience. As every human being is born on the nature *(fitrat)* of God and as God has breathed His spirit in every human being, the voice of human conscience, at this stage, expresses the voice of God. Modern existential psychoanalysis also shows that if human conscience is awake and if a man hears the voice of his conscience and acts accordingly, he will develop his God- given potentialities and his independence, moral integrity and the capacity to sympathise and genuinely love and help others, will be enhanced. Of course, this sixth stage of the sufi is much higher than what is indicated by modern existential psychoanalysis.

7. *Baqa dar Fana*

In this final stage, the seeker merges himself or herself in the Infinite. He loses himself in the Absolute Reality, i.e. Allah and so it is the stage of *Fana*, but in Islamic Sufism, it is the condition of *Baqa* i.e. perpetual living also as a distinct and highly integrated personality. Hallaj al-Mansur also described this condition almost in a similar way. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal has drawn attention to it by pointing out that it does not imply the loss of personality but rather the more precise definition of it and greater development of human personality. Love of God and merging and becoming one with God is the food of the human ego and so by losing one's self in God, one's personality becomes more integrated, more powerful and more distinct.

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal has drawn our attention to the different stages of spiritual experience as pointed out by Sheikh Ahmad of Sirhind in the following words:

"I quote here the substance of a passage from a great religious genius of the seventeenth century — Sheikh Ahmad of Sirhind whose fearless analytical criticism of contemporary Sufism resulted in the development of a new technique. All the various systems of sufi technique in India came from Central Asia and Arabia; his is the only technique which crossed the Indian border and is still a living force in the Punjab, Afghanistan and Asiatic Russia. I am afraid it is not possible for me to expound the real meaning of this passage in the language of modern psychology; for such language does not yet exist. Since, however, my object is simply to give you an idea of the infinite wealth of experience which the ego in his Divine quest has to sift and pass through, I do hope you will excuse me for the apparently outlandish terminology which possesses a real substance of meaning, but which was formed under the inspiration of a religious psychology developed in the atmosphere of a different culture. Coming now to the passage, the experience of one 'Abd al-Mu'min was described to the Sheikh as follows.

Heavens and Earth and God's throne and Hell and Paradise have all ceased to exist for me. When I look round I find them nowhere. When I stand in the presence of somebody I see nobody before me: nay, even my own being is lost to me. God is infinite. Nobody can encompass Him; and this is the extreme limit of spiritual experience. No saint has been able to go beyond this."

On this the Sheikh replied:

"The experience which is described has its origin in the ever varying life of the *qalb;* and it appears to me that the recipient of it has not yet passed even one-fourth of the innumerable 'Stations' of the 'Qalb'. The remaining three-fourths must be passed through in order to finish the experiences of this first 'Station' of spiritual life. Beyond this 'Station' there are other 'stations' known as *Ruh, Sirr-i Khafi,* and *Sirr-i Akhfa,* each of these 'Stations' which together constitute what is technically called *'Alam-i Amr*

has its own characteristic states and experiences. After having passed through these 'Stations' the seeker of truth gradually receives the illuminations of 'Divine Names' and 'Divine Attributes' and finally the illuminations of the Divine Essence".[4]

References

1. Al-Qur'an (98:8)
2. *Ibid.*, (89:27, 28)
3. Ahmad, M.M. Zuhuruddin, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-203.
4. Iqbal, Muhammad, *op. cit.*, pp. 192-193.

7

The Science of Psychoanalysis, Sufism and Islam

Psychic Maturity Necessary for Seeking Truth

Attainment of psychic maturity and strengthening of human personality is the aim of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis discovers the aim of human psyche and also discusses the ways of realising them in one's life.

Psychic problems and ailments reduce the individual's capacity to love and genuinely sympathise with other people, undermine his independence, mar his moral integrity, reduce his efficiency and blur his reasoning capacity which makes discovery or understanding of truth impossible or renders it very difficult. To love and sympathise, to have moral integrity and a keen sense of moral responsibility and to have independence from authority and to use reason for penetration of reality and for understanding of truth are the inherent potential aims of human psyche. They are as if ingrained by God in every human being. To work for their realisation in one's life and in society is the natural tendency potentially working in every human being.

Through existential psychoanalysis, particularly as developed by Erich Fromm in his books *Man for Himself*,

Psychoanalysis and Religion, *Sane Society* and *Escape from Freedom*, etc. it has been shown by him that Man is the only animal who feels his distinct individuality as separate from Nature and other human beings and this separation creates a terrible sense of insecurity which he cannot bear even for a second, unless he finds either some way of becoming one with Nature, one with society and one with one's own self, and thus gaining inner independence and freedom or losing his separate individuality in some higher authority with a sense of dependence and powerlessness and thereby coming out only temporarily from the pangs of separation. The first way is constructive and helps Man to develop his personality and gain independence and leads to enhancement of his or her capacity to sympathise and serve others and love others and lead a productive and happy life with integrity and peaceful relations in the society, while the second way leads to destruction and splitting of one's personality and to dependence and slavishness and unhappiness and also to conflicts and clashes in the society.

Need for a System of Orientation and Object of Devotion

Clarifying this, Erich Fromm wrote the following in his book *Psychoanalysis and Religion*.

"The study of man permits us to recognise that the need for a common system of orientation and for an object of devotion is deeply rooted in the conditions of human existence. I have attempted in *Man for Himself* to analyse the nature of this need, and I quote from that book:

"Self-awareness, reason and imagination have disrupted the 'harmony', which characterises animal existence. Their emergence has made man into an anomaly, into the freak of the universe. He is part of nature, subject to her physical laws and unable to change them, yet he transcends the rest of nature. He is set apart while being a part; he is homeless, yet chained to the home he shares with all creatures. Cast into this world at an accidental place and time, he is forced out of it, again accidentally. Being aware of himself, he realises his powerlessness and the limitations

of his existence. He visualises his own end death. Never is he free from the dichotomy of his existence; he cannot rid himself of his mind, even if he should want to; he cannot rid himself of his body as long as he is alive — and his body makes him want to be alive.

"Reason, man's blessing, is also his curse; it forces him to cope everlastingly with the task of solving an insoluble dichotomy. Human existence is different in this respect from that of all other organisms; it is in a state of constant and unavoidable disequilibrium. Man's life cannot 'be lived' by repeating the pattern of his species; he must live. Man is the only animal that can be bored, that can be discontented, that can feel evicted from paradise. Man is the only animal for which his own existence is a problem which he has to solve and from which he cannot escape. He cannot go back to the prehuman state of harmony with nature; he must proceed to develop his reason until he becomes the master of nature, and of himself.

"He must give account to himself of himself, and of the meaning of his existence. He is driven to overcome this inner split, tormented by a craving for 'absoluteness,' for another kind of harmony which can lift the curse by which he was separated from nature, from his fellow men, and from himself.

"The disharmony of man's existence generates needs which far transcend those of his animal origin. These needs result in an imperative drive to restore unity and equilibrium between himself and the rest of nature. He makes the attempt to restore this unity and equilibrium in the first place in thought by constructing an all-inclusive mental picture of the world which serves as a frame of reference from which he can derive an answer to the question of where he stands and what he ought to do? But such thought - systems are not sufficient. If man were only a disembodied intellect, his aim would be achieved by a comprehensive thought-system. But since he is an entity endowed with a body as well as a mind he has to react to the dichotomy of his existence not only in thinking but also in the process of living, in his feelings and actions. He has to strive for the experience of unity and oneness

in all spheres of his being in order to find a new equilibrium. Hence any satisfying system of orientation implies not only intellectual elements but elements of feeling and sense to be realised in action in all fields of human endeavour. Devotion to an aim, or an idea, or a power transcending man such as God, is an expression of this need for completeness in the process of living".

Every Man has Religion — True or False

"Because the need for a system of orientation and devotion is an intrinsic part of human existence we can understand the intensity of this need. Indeed, there is no other more powerful source of energy in man. Man is not free to choose between having or not having 'ideals', but he is free to choose between different kinds of ideals, between being devoted to the worship of power and destruction and being devoted to reason and love. All men are 'idealists' and are striving for something beyond the attainment of physical satisfaction. They differ in the kinds of ideals they believe in. The very best but also the most satanic manifestations of man's mind are expressions not of his flesh but of his 'idealism', of his spirit. Therefore a relativistic view which claims that to have some ideal or some religious feeling is valuable in itself is dangerous and erroneous. We must understand every ideal including those which appear in secular ideologies as expressions of the same human need and we must judge them with respect to their truth, to the extent to which they are conductive to the unfolding of man's powers and to the degree to which they are a real answer to man's need for equilibrium and harmony in his world[1]."

In his book *Psychoanalysis and Religion*, he again wrote: "The aim of therapy is not primarily adjustment but optimal development of a person's potentialities and the realisation of his individuality. If someone violates his moral and intellectual integrity he weakens or even paralyses his total personality. He is unhappy and suffers. But in spite of what he thinks, the problem of mental health cannot be separated from the basic human problem, that of achieving

the aims of human life: independence, integrity, and the ability to love."[2]

Iqbal Precedes Fromm

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal in his book *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* had highlighted the same approach while discussing the episode of Adam and Eve being driven out from paradise and elucidating the approach of the Qur'an regarding the meaning and the purpose of human life through the discussion of this episode. Dr. Iqbal had very ably pointed out before Erich Fromm wrote about it in the nicest possible way as follows.

"Thus we see that the Qur'anic legend of the Fall has nothing to do with the first appearance of man on this planet. Its purpose is rather to indicate man's rise from a primitive state of instinctive appetite to the conscious possession of a free self, capable of doubt and disobedience. The Fall does not mean any moral depravity; it is man's transition from simple consciousness to the first flash of self-consciousness, a kind of waking from the dream of nature with a throb of personal causality in one's own being. Nor does the Qur'an regard the earth as a torture-hall where an elementally wicked humanity is imprisoned for an original act of sin. Man's first act of disobedience was also his first act of free choice; and that is why, according to the Qur'anic narration, Adam's first transgression was forgiven. Now goodness is not a matter of compulsion; it is the self's free surrender to the moral ideal and arises out of a willing co-operation of free egos. A being whose movements are wholly determined like a machine cannot produce goodness. Freedom is thus a condition of goodness. But to permit the emergence of a finite ego who has the power to choose, after considering the relative values of several courses of action open to him, is really to take a great risk; for the freedom to choose good involves also the freedom to choose what is the opposite of good. That God has taken this risk shows His immense faith in man; it is for man now to justify this faith. Perhaps such a risk alone makes it possible to test and develop

the potentialities of a being who was created of the 'goodliest fabric' and then 'brought down to be the lowest of the low'. As the Qur'an says: "And for trial will We test you with evil and with good". (12:36). Good and evil, therefore, though opposites, must fall within the same whole.

"Thus Adam's insertion into a painful physical environment was not meant as a punishment, it was meant rather to defeat the object of Satan who, as an enemy of man, diplomatically tried to keep him, ignorant of the joy of perpetual growth and expansion. But the life of a finite ego in an obstructing environment depends on the perpetual expansion of knowledge based on actual experience. And the experience of a finite ego to whom several possibilities are open expands only by method of trial and error"[3].

Sufism — A Method for Strengthening Human Personality

The aim of Islamic Sufism also has been the strengthening of human personality by showing the ways of becoming one with God.

But God is there in everything of nature and in all the human beings and in one's own self. So when a person becomes one with nature, one with other human beings and one with one's own unconscious self, he or she is becoming one with transcendental God who is immanent in everything, in every living being and in every human being. The theory of *Wahdat al-Wujud* of Ibn 'Arabi had highlighted these points very well. People who misunderstand this theory, they have not taken into account Ibn 'Arabi's theory of 'Perfect Man' *(al-Insan al-Kamil)* whose personality is expected to have become very strong by becoming one with God. The Qur'an describes it as meeting with God. Adam and Eve being driven out from paradise is separation from God which is hell while meeting with God is heaven for Man.

When a person becomes one with Nature, one with society and one with his own's self, actually he becomes one with transcendental God who is immanent in the Universe. Erich Fromm also had drawn attention to the

same through his deep study of psychoanalysis and religion. He wrote: "Humanistic religion, on the contrary, is centered around man and his strength. Man must develop his power of reason in order to understand himself, his relationship to his fellow men and his position in the universe. He must recognise the truth, both with regard to his powers of love for others as well as for himself and experience the solidarity of all living beings. He must have principles and norms to guide him in this aim. Religious experience in this kind of religion is the experience of oneness with the All, based on one's relatedness to the world as it is grasped with thought and with love. Man's aim in humanistic religion is to achieve the greatest strength, not the greatest powerlessness; virtue is self-realisation, not obedience. Faith is certainty of conviction based on one's experience of thought and feeling, not assent to propositions on the credit of the proposer. The prevailing mood is that of joy, while the prevailing mood in authoritarian religion is that of sorrow and of guilt.

Inasmuch as humanistic religions are theistic, God is a symbol of man's own powers which he tries to realise in his life, and is not a symbol of force and domination, having power over man".[4]

Surrendering to Allah is to follow the laws of God which manifest the Attributes of God. So it is not slavish submission, but voluntary and responsible acceptance of Reality and its Laws. The Qur'an considers Man to be the co-worker with God. The spiritually awakened person is described as *Wali-Allah* in the Qur'an. The etymological meaning of the word 'Wali' is 'friend' and 'Wali-Allah' means the 'Friend of God.'

Man is God's Vicegerent on Earth

Through the universe and specially through Man, God is expressing the richness of His personality. That is why Man is the vicegerent *(Khalifa)* of God in the universe. The whole universe is meant to be the servant of Man and Man is subservient to God in the sense that he has to follow the laws of God and thus has to accept his limitations

as a responsible person, but at the same time, he is the friend of God and co-worker with God. Of course, in comparison with God, he is materially a tiny speck, but spiritually, his personality is highly significant in the wider life and wider personality of God. By becoming one with God, Man's personality becomes stronger and his capacity to gain happiness is enhanced.

Al-Insan al-Kamil of Ibn 'Arabi and Qalandar of Iqbal — the Same

When Man loses himself in God *(Fana fi-Allah)*, actually he is becoming one with God's personality and so he becomes a stronger personality by being surcharged by the spirit of God. This renewed self is described as existing in God *(Baqi bi-Allah)* in sufi literature. Such a person is called a perfect Man (Insan al-Kamil) by Ibn 'Arabi (and Qalandar by Dr. Muhammad Iqbal). His theory of *Wahdat al-Wujud* (unity of Being) and *al-Insan al-Kamil* (Prefect Man) had been developed and clarified in his famous books *Futuhat al-Makkiyah* and '*Fusus al-Hikam*'. The theory of perfection of Man was developed by Ibn 'Arabi much before it was done by Rudolf Goechel in 1590.

Erich Fromm had the following to say in his *Psychoanalysis and Religion:* "While in some cultures like that of Egypt the priests were the 'physicians of the soul', in others such as Greece this function was at least partly assumed by philosophers. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle did not claim to speak in the name of any revelation but with the authority of reason and of their concern with man's happiness and the unfolding of his soul. They were concerned with man as an end in himself as the most significant subject-matter of inquiry. Their treatises on philosophy and ethics were at the same time works on psychology. This tradition of antiquity was continued in the Renaissance and it is very characteristic that the first book which uses the word 'psychologia' in its title has the subtitle *Hoc est de perfection Hominis* (This is of the perfection of Man). It was during the Enlightenment that this tradition reached its highest point. Out of their belief in man's reason the philosophers of the Enlightenment, who were at the same time students

of man's soul, affirmed man's independence from political shackles as well as from, those of superstition and ignorance. They taught him to abolish those conditions of existence which required the maintenance of illusions. Their psychological inquiry was rooted in the attempt to discover the conditions for human happiness. Happiness, they said, can be achieved only when man has achieved inner freedom; only then can he be mentally healthy. But in the last few generations the rationalism of the Enlightenment has undergone drastic change. Drunk with a new material prosperity and success in mastering nature, man no longer has considered himself the primary concern of life and of theoretical inquiry. Reason as the means for discovering the truth and penetrating the surface to the essence of phenomena has been relinquished for intellect as a mere instrument to manipulate things and men. Man has ceased to believe that the power of reason can establish the validity of norms and ideas for human conduct"[5]. Again Erich Fromm writes in his book *Psychoanalysis and Religion* about the nature of religious experience in the following words.

"Learning to listen to one's conscience and to react to it does not lead to any smug and lulling 'peace of mind' or 'peace of soul'. It leads to peace with one's conscience — not a passive state of bliss and satisfaction but continuous sensitivity to our conscience and the readiness to respond to it.

"I have tried to show in this chapter that the psychoanalytic cure of the soul aims at helping the patient to achieve an attitude which can be called religious in the humanistic though not in the authoritarian sense of the word. It seeks to enable him to gain the faculty to see the truth, to love, to become free and responsible, and to be sensitive to the voice of his conscience.

"Beyond the attitude of wonder and of concern there is a third element in religious experience, the one which is most clearly exhibited and described by the mystics. It is an attitude of oneness not only in oneself, not only with one's fellow men, but with all life and, beyond that, with the universe. Some may think that this attitude is one

in which the uniqueness and individuality of the self are denied and the experience of self-weakend. That this is not so constitutes the paradoxical nature of this attitude. It comprises both the sharp and even painful awareness of one's self as a separate and unique entity and the longing to break through the confines of this individual organisation and to be one with the All. The religious attitude in this sense is simultaneously the fullest experience of individuality and of its opposite; it is not so much a blending of the two as a polarity from whose tension, religious experience springs. It is an attitude of pride and integrity and at the same time of a humility which stems from experiencing oneself as but a thread in the texture of the universe".[6]

Psychoanalysis Highlights the Link between Qur'anic Teachings and Sufism

Thus we observe that the modern psychoanalysis founded by Sigmund Freud and specially existential psychoanalysis as developed by Erich Fromm has provided the missing link between the basic Sufi approach and basic Qur'anic teaching. Iqbal has drawn attention to the same fact of individual's spiritual experience in the following words:

"The climax of religious life , however, is the discovery of the ego as an individual deeper than his conceptually describable habitual selfhood. It is in contact with the Most Real that the ego discovers its uniqueness, its metaphysical status, and the possibility of improvement in that status. Strictly speaking, the experience which leads to this discovery is not a conceptually manageable intellectual fact; it is a vital fact, an attitude consequent on an inner biological transformation which cannot be captured in the net of logical categories, it can embody itself only in a world-making or world-shaking act; and in this form, alone the content of this timeless experience can diffuse itself in the time-movement, and make itself effectively visible to the eye of history.

"In so far as the ultimate nature of Reality is concerned nothing is at stake in the venture of science; in the religious venture the whole career of the ego as an assimilative

personal centre of life and experience is at stake. Conduct; which involves a decision of the ultimate fate of the agent cannot be based on illusions. A wrong concept misleads the understanding; a wrong deed degrades the whole man, and may eventually demolish the structure of the human ego. The mere concept affects life only partially; the deed is dynamically related to reality and issues from a generally constant attitude of the whole man towards reality. No doubt the deed, i.e., the control of psychological and physiological processes with a view to tune up the ego for an immediate contact with the ultimate Reality is, and cannot but be, individual in form and content; yet the deed, too, is liable to be socialised when others begin to live through it with a view to discover for themselves its effectiveness as a method of approaching the Real. The evidence of religious experts in all ages and countries is that there are potential types of consciousness lying close to our normal consciousness. If these types of consciousness open up possibilities of life-giving and knowledge-yielding experience, the question of the possibility of religion as a form of higher experience is a perfectly legitimate one and demands our serious attention."[7]

Change in Social Institutions Necessary for Psychic Development

The Qur'an has addressed individuals as well as groups of individuals and has insisted for moral and spiritual transformation of individuals as well as transformation of economic, political, social and familial institutions of the society. This is because the nature of these structures and institutions affect the development of the individuals. As for example if there is political dictatorship in the society, development of individual personality is crushed, as there is no freedom of speech, no freedom of association and political dissent is ruthlessly crushed by brute force. At the same time, if there is wide-spread poverty, unemployment and corruption in the society, development of individual personalities is hampered. Absolute poverty must be abolished completely and a high level of employment is necessary in order to enable the people to taste the fruits

of economic development, as without employment, one cannot share the cake of increasing national output. The same applies to the social structure and the family structure. Also, there should be wide-spread literacy. Besides, large-scale public health measures also should be undertaken. There should be viable social security system also. All this is consistent with a healthy free market, private enterprise, competitive economy. It implies to be economic democracy. Thus political democracy as well as economic democracy are required with the full development of the safeguards for the respect of the fundamental rights of all the individuals irrespective of their religion, creed, colour, race, community or sex. All these points become more clear when we take into account the exegesis of the Qur'an as written by Maulana Abu'l - Kalam Azad.

Islam — The Natural Religion — Light Thrown by Abu'l - Kalam Azad

Maulana Abu'l - Kalam Azad has explained the nature of Religion in very clear terms. He writes, "Whenever the Qur'an stresses that it has come only to confirm the previous revealed scriptures and not to deny them, and calls upon their followers to believe in the Qur'an also, it does so only to emphasise that Qur'an does not present anything antagonistic to their faiths, nor does it aim to turn them away from their own faiths, but that in fact even aids them to remain staunch to them. It therefore, asks in astonishment: Why then do they declare war against the Qur'an or quarrel with it?

"M'ARUF AND MUNKAR: For the same reason, the Qur'an uses the term *m'aruf* for good deeds and *munkar* for evil deeds. "Enjoin the *m'aruf* and forbid the *munkar*" (3:17) is the injunction of the Qur'an. The word *m'aruf* is that which is recognised on all hands as good. *Munkar* means that which is rejected by all human beings. The Qur'an has used these terms particularly because whatever the differences among mankind, there are certain things which are recognised on all hands to be good, and likewise there are certain things which are denied that appellation or are not recognised as good. For instance, all agree that

to speak truth is right and to speak untruth is wrong. All agree that honesty is a virtue and dishonesty is a vice. All agree that service to parents, kindliness towards neighbours, care of the poor, and aiding of the oppressed are things good in themselves and none holds a different view about them. All the religions of the world, all moral codes, all philosophies, all communities, whatever, view they may severally hold in other matters, they all are one in according universal recognition to such qualities. The Qur'an states that qualities of this category are the qualities which the Din of God or religion enjoins on man. Since this attitude is basic to the revealed religions, there has been no difference in respect of it and has, therefore, been universally recognised by all revealed religions (as the correct one). So the Qur'an says that it enjoins what each of them universally accepts as the right thing and prohibits all that is regarded as wrong. In others words, it directs man to do what is universally regarded as right, and prohibits what is universally regarded as wrong. So it asks: 'Why then should there be any opposition to what the Qur'an thus preaches?'

"The Way of God: The Qur'an says that such is the line of conduct prescribed for man by God, a line of conduct agreeable to human nature. And the Qur'an says there shall be no change in the lines prescribed by Nature, and that is the right religion or Deen-i Hanif as the Qur'an calls it, the way adopted by the prophet Abraham. It is this very religion which the Qur'an styles as Islam, or the path of surrender or conformity to the laws of life fixed by God". In the Qur'an, it is clearly stated:

"Turn steadfastly to the path of devotion, the way of Allah, for which He hath fitted man. There is no altering of the way of Allah. That is the right religion; but most people know it not. And be ye turned to Him, and fear Him and observe prayer, and be not of those who unite gods with God, of those who have split up their religion and have become sects, where every party rejoices in what is their own". (30:29-30).

"Al-ISLAM : It is this Islam so continuously delivered

throughout the ages which is the true religion or way of life as fixed by God, says the Qur'an. Everything else is manmade, mere groupism. If you should resolve together to follow the path of devotion to God, of righteous living, and turn away from all aberrations thereof, the purpose of the Qur'an is fulfilled."[8]

Russell's and Roy's Views Regarding the Source of Moral Values

Some thinkers do not accept that spiritual experience can be the source of knowledge about soul, God and life after death and other spiritual entities, and they think that absolute humanitarian values are simply subjective wishes of human beings though they grant that these absolute values are absolutely necessary for the long-term happiness and progress and personality development of the individuals. Bertrand Russell is one of them. Though these wishes of human beings are subjective, but they are the free choices of rational individuals which lead to genuine happiness of Man and progress of society, and this free choice on the part of human beings, implies the independence and freedom of rational and enlightened individuals according to Bertrand Russell. M.N. Roy believes in freedom and rationality of Man and derives these values from the biological make up of Man and thus tries to provide the scientific and objective basis to these values. Erich Fromm tries to derive these values of freedom, independence, justice and rationality from the inherent psychological make up of Man and thereby he tries to provide the objective base to these moral values and thus his approach is very near to that of the religious philosophers like Dr. Muhammad Iqbal and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

In fact, every human being derives his moral values from his spiritual experience and from his philosophy regarding the universe and the place of Man in it and the purpose of human life in it. Every man has got some philosophy — conscious or unconscious, right or wrong. We should have the right philosophy consciously for our happiness and for peace and progress of society.

Spiritual Experience — Not Abnormal, but Supernormal

Some thinkers wrongly believe that revelation implies cerebral or mental disorder. If it is mental disorder, it implies neurosis or psychosis on the part of the bearer of revelation. It is agreed in the science of psychoanalysis that neurosis and psychosis lead to inefficiency in work, spoiling of relations with other human beings and unhappiness, irrational fear and disappointment and failure in life. But if the bearer of revelation shows better efficiency in work, better relations with other human beings and is found to be happy and without fear and disappointment, and achieves great successes in life, then it has to be admitted that the bearer of revelation is having mental experience of a higher and supernormal level. One cannot deny these other higher levels of psychic experience. All knowledge is based on experience alongwith the use of intellect and then such knowledge is expressed through Reason. Thus Reason is not an alternative to revelation, but reason without revelation or spiritual experience is mere Intellect and not Reason. So when one talks about Reason, it implies the backing of revelatory experience behind it and thus Reason finds echo in the Reason of other spiritually alleviated-wise persons. The dichotomy between Reason and Revelation is the result of the wrong understanding of the nature of Revelation, Reason, Intellect, Intelligence and the fact of experience being the source of knowledge.

Prophet Muhammad — the Most Successful Man

Michael Hart wrote a book on achievements of 100 persons who have impacted mankind the most from the point of view of enhancing welfare and transforming the lives of the people. Among these 100 persons, he ranks Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) as number one.

Draper's Views on the Achievements of Prophet Muhammad

Draper in his book *History of the Intellectual Development of Europe* had said the same thing with the following words:

"The founder of Islam has been characterised as 'the man who, of all men, has exercised the greatest influence upon the human race.'[9]

"He did not engage in vain-metaphysics, but applied himself to improving the social condition of his people by regulations respecting personal cleanliness, sobriety, fasting, prayer. Above all other works, he esteemed alms-giving and charity. With a liberality to which the world had of late become a stranger, he admitted the salvation of men of any form of faith provided they were virtuous' (Draper, *Ibid*).[10]

M.N. Roy's Reading of the Achievements of Prophet Muhammad, Muslims and Islam

About the achievements of Prophet Muhammad, Muslims and Islam, Mr. M.N. Roy had the following to say in his book *The Historical Role of Islam.*

"Vulgar interpreters of the Islamic history lay stress upon its military achievements either to praise or to deprecate its far-reaching revolutionary significance. If the undoubtedly brilliant military conquests of the Saracens were the only measure of the historic role of Islam, then it would not be a unique historical phenomenon. The depredations of the barbarians of Tartars and Scythians (Goths, Huns, Vandals, Avars, Mongols etc.) approximated, if not equalled or excelled their military accomplishments. But there is a vast difference between the tidal waves that occasionally rolled West, South and East, from the border land of Europe and Asia, and the Arabic eruption of religious frenzy. Like tidal waves the former rolled on in their cataclysmic greatness only to subside, sooner or later, having distributed death and destruction, far and wide. The latter, on the contrary, was an abiding historical phenomenon, which ushered in a brilliant chapter of the cultural annals of mankind. Destruction was only a subsidiary part of its mission. It pulled down the played-out old, to construct a necessary new. It demolished the holy edifices of the Caesars and the Chosroes, only to rescue from their impending ruin the accumulated treasures of human knowledge, to preserve

and multiply them for the benefit of the posterity.

'The prodigious feats of the Saracen horsemen are not the only distinctive feature of Islam. They simply captivate our attention which must marvel at them, and impel us to search out and admire the causes of such a tremendously dynamic historical phenomenon. The miraculous performance of the 'Army of God' usually dazzles the vision and the more magnificent achievements of the Islamic revolution are seldom known to the average student of history, even if he be a follower of Muhammad. Yet, the martial victories of the followers of the Arabian Prophet were but the prelude to a more magnificent and lasting performance in the social and cultural fields. They only created the conditions for political unity, which opened up an era of economic prosperity and spiritual progress. The stupendous ruins of the Roman and Persian Empires had to be cleared away so that a new social order could rise with new ideas and new ideals. The dark superstition of the Magian mysticism and the corrupt atmosphere of the Greek Church vitiated the spiritual life of the subjects of the decrepit Persian and Byzantine Empires rendering all moral and intellectual progress impossible. The severe monotheism of Muhammad wielded the formidable scimitar of the Saracens not only to destroy the profane idolatry of the Arabian tribes; it also proved to be the invincible instrument of history for freeing a considerable section of mankind from the eternal evil spirit of Zoroaster as well as from degenerate Christianity given to the superstition of miracle-mongering, to the deadly disease of monasticism and to the idolatrous worship of Saints. The amazing achievements of Saracen arms only prove that they were wielded at the service of history — for the progress of humanity.

'The rich spiritual legacy of the glorious civilisation of ancient Greece was almost buried under the dreary ruins of the Roman Empire, and lost in the darkness of Christian superstition. The grand mission of rescuing the invaluable patrimony, which eventually enabled the peoples of Europe to emerge from the depressing gloom of the holy middle-ages, and build the marvellous monument of modern

civilisation, belonged to the Saracen arms, and to the socio-political structure erected on the basis of Islamic Monotheism. The sword of Islam, wielded ostensibly at the service of God, actually contributed to the victory of a new social force — the blossoming of a new intellectual life — which eventually dug the grave of all religions and faiths.

"Islam rose rather as a political movement than a religion in the strictest sense of the word. In the initial stages of its history, it was essentially a call for the unity of the nomadic tribes inhabiting the Arabian Desert. Upon its speedy realisation, the politic-religious unitarian doctrine became the flag under which the Asiatic and African provinces of the Roman Empire survived the dissolution of the antique social order. The previous revolt had miscarried itself. Christianity had lost its original revolutionary fervour becoming, on the one hand, the ideology of social dissolution (Monasticism) and a prop for the decaying Empire, on the other. But the social crisis continued, aggravated by the degeneration of Christianity. The message of hope and salvation came from the Caravan traders of Arabia who had stood outside the corrupting atmosphere of the decomposed Roman world, and prospered by their advantageous position. The 'Revolt of Islam' saved humanity.

"Their fanaticism was softened by generosity and sound commonsense. Their ambition was remarkably free from selfishness. Godliness, for them, was not a veil for greediness.

"Everywhere, the Saracen invaders were welcome as deliverers by peoples oppressed, tyrannised and tormented by Byzantine corruption, Persian despotism and Christian superstition. Fanatically faithfull to the revolutionary teachings of the Prophet, and obediently acting according to the noble, wise and eminently practical injunctions of the Khalif, the Saracen invaders easily enlisted the sympathy and support of the peoples they conquered. No invader can establish an abiding domination over conquered peoples, except with their active support or tacit toleration.

"It is gross misreading of history to confound Islam with militarism, Muhammad was the Prophet not of the Saracen warriors, but of the Arab merchants. The very name with

which he baptised his creed contradicts the current notion about its aim. Etymologically, Islam means to make peace, or the making of peace; to make peace with God by doing homage to his Oneness, repudiating the fraudulent divinity of idols which had usurped His sole claim to the devotion of man; and to make peace on earth through the union of the Arabian tribes. The peace on earth was of immediate importance, and greater consequence. The temporal interest of the Arabian merchants required it, for, trade thrives better under peaceful conditions. Since decayed states and degenerated religions bred the germs of continued wars and perennial revolts, their destruction was a condition for peace. The creed of Muhammad made peace at home, and the martial valour of the Saracens conferred the same blessing on the peoples inhabiting the vast territories from Samarcand to Spain.

"As soon as a country came under the domination of the Arabs, its economic life was quickened by the encouragement of industry and agriculture. The spirit and interest of the Arab traders determined and directed the policy of the Islamic State. In the Roman world as well as in all the other lands of antique civilisation, the ruling classes detested all productive labour, looked down upon trade and industry. War and worship were their noble professions. With the Arabs, it was different. Nomadic life in a desert had taught them to appreciate labour as the source of freedom. With them, trade was an honourable as well as a lucrative occupation of the free man. Thus, the Islamic State was based upon social relations entirely different from those of the old. Religion extolled industry, and encouraged a normal indulgence of nature. Trade was free, and as noble a profession as state crafts war, letter and science. The Khalifs of Baghdad were not only great traders; the earlier ones learned, and actually practised some craft to purchase their personal necessities with the proceeds of manual labour. Most of the great Arab philosophers and scholars came from opulent trading families. The culture and refinement of the courts of Bokhara and Samarcand, the munificence of the Fatemite rulers of Africa and the splendour of the Sultans of Andalusia

were equally produced rather by the profits of prosperous trade than by taxes exorted by despotic measures.

"The laws of Koran revolutionised social relations. Increased production, the result of this revolution, quickened trade which ushered in an era of cosmopolitanism and spiritual uplift. Trade broadens the vision of man. Visiting distant lands, getting used to the sight of strange customs, mixing with peoples of diverse races, the trader frees himself from the prejudices and limitations born of the local conditions of his native land. He develops the capacities of toleration, sympathy and understanding for the habits, views and faiths of others. Observation and inquisitiveness, which guide his voyage on the unknown sea, or direct his steps in lands, kill in him the comfort of credulity. The growth of critical faculty places him at the gate of knowledge. The essence of his occupation teaches the trader to think in abstraction. He is not interested in his merchandise as such. His mind is occupied with the idea of profit. It is all the same to him whether his camels or ships are ladden with wool or corn or spices. He is concerned with something which is neither these nor other concrete things he handles. These are simply the means to attain his end — to make profit which is a category abstracted from the concrete commodity he buys or sells. He appreciates things, not in their intrinsic value, but according to their capacity to produce profit.

"Toleration for strange things, the attempt to understand them, freedom from prejudice, faculty of observation, ability to think in abstract — all these qualities acquired by the trader, thanks to the nature of his occupation, go into the making of a philosophical outlook. Having seen different peoples cherish diverse forms of superstitions as divine wisdom, practise equally absurd rites and rituals or expressing devotion, extol prejudices to the dignity of eternal truth, the cosmopolitan mind of the travelled traders indulgently smiles upon the credulity of all, deplores their depravity equally, and respects the common element of faith beneath the superficial diversities of theological dogmas and forms of worship.

"The main arteries of international trade of the medieval world ran through the countries which embraced Islam and were united in the Saracen Empire. The northern routes of trade with China, which passed through Constantinople to Italy and other countries of Western Europe, had become extremely risky owing to the Scythian inroads and the ruinous fiscal policy of the Byzantine Empire. After their conquest of Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia and the territories across the Oxus, the Arabs captured the Chinese trade and diverted it to pass through their domain of North Africa and Spain, ultimately to reach the markets of Western Europe. During the eighth to the eleventh centuries, practically the entire trade between India and China, on the one hand, and Europe, on the other, was done by the Arabs. Thousands of traders travelled with their Caravans, loaded with precious cargoes, from the remote frontiers of China and India all the way to Morocco and Spain. They were not persecuted or detested as their kind had been in all the countries of antique civilisation with the honourable exception of Greece. In the Empire of the Saracens, they belonged to the ruling class. Consequently, the learning and culture, that thrived so luxuriantly owing to the prosperity of the Saracen Empire, bore the stamp of their native broad-mindedness, cosmopolitanism and incredulity. Under the leadership of a martial aristocracy and jealous priesthood, human ideology, takes the form of dogmatic faith for misty mysticism. Philosophy — the search for a rational explanation of the Universe originates in a society ruled by an aristocracy engaged in trade. The city-states of the Ionian Greeks were, therefore, the birth-places of philosophy.

"Islam was a necessary product of history, an instrument of human progress. It rose as the ideology of a new social relation which, in its turn, revolutionised the mind of man. But just as it had subverted and replaced older cultures, decayed in course of time, Islam, in its turn, was also overstepped by further social developments, and consequently had to hand over its spiritual leadership to other agencies born out of newer conditions. But it contributed to the forging of new ideological instruments which brought

about the subsequent social revolution. The instruments were experimental science and rationalist philosophy. It stands to the credit of Islamic culture to have been instrumental in the promotion of the ideology of a new social revolution.

"Capitalist mode of production rescued Europe from the chaos of medieval barbarism. It fought and in the long run vanquished Christian theology and the spiritual monopoly of the Catholic Church with the potent weapon of rationalist philosophy. This weapon, invented by the ancient sages of Greece came to the possession of the founders of modern civilisation through the Arab scholars who had not only preserved the precious patrimony, but added to it handsomely. The historic battle, begun by the nomads of the Arabian desert, under the religious flag of Islam, was fought step by step through a thousand years on fields scattered over the three continents, to be won finally in Europe under the profane standard of the eighteenth century Enlightenment and Bourgeois Revolution"[11].

The great effectiveness of Islam, Prophet Muhammad and Muslims on the individual lives and the social life in the larger part of the world in the past and in the present, for the better, shows that revelation is a higher form of psychic experience which enhances Man's efficiency in work, improves his relations with other human beings and brings about the integration of all levels of psychic experience of man and gives him high moral values which make him happy and prosporous and he becomes instrumental for the improvement of the lives of others around him. Therefore in this world which is full of destructive weapons and of individuals with diseased minds, the message of Islam has got great relevance and should be given serious thought.

References

1. Fromm, Erich, *Psychoanalysis and Religion*, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-25.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 74
3. Iqbal, Muhammad, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-87.
4. Fromm, Erich, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 93, 95.
7. Iqbal, Muhammad, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-184.
8. Abul Kalam, Maulana Azad, *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*, Vol. I (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, India - 1962) pp. 175-176.
9. Roy, M. N., *The Historical Role of Islam*, *op. cit.*, p. 57
10. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 9-15 and 19-23.

8

Difference between Din and Shari'ah

Two Basic Points of the Message of the Qur'an

Maulana Abu'l - Kalam Azad, in his exegesis *(Tafsir)* of Qur'an, specially in that of the first chapter ('Surah Fatiha', which gives the essence of the teachings of the Qur'an) has highlighted two basic points of the message of the Qur'an as revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him).

1. One is that Muhammad has not come with any new message, but with the same message as brought by prophets Adam, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Ishmael, Joseph, Moses, Solomon, David, Jesus and other prophets sent in all other parts of the world, though names of some prophets are mentioned in the Qur'an and some names are not mentioned in the Qur'an as the Qur'an itself points out.[1] But the message of all the prophets was the same, i.e. belief in One God and doing of good *(Ma'ruf)* deeds and remaining away from bad *(Munkar)* deeds and this is the *Din* (Religion) and it is the straight path *(Sirat al-Mustaqim)* according to the Qur'an.

2. The second is that every human being is born on the nature *(fitrat)* of God[2] and God has breathed from His spirit into every human being and so every human being

— man and woman — has got the natural capacity to know *Ma'ruf* (good) deeds and *Munkar* (bad) deeds and the function of the prophet is to remind the human beings of this inner Islam implanted in every human being. If a person does M'aruf deeds, the prophet is *Bashir* i.e. the giver of glad tidings and if a person does bad deeds, the prophet is *Nazir*, i.e. a warner for the evil-doers that bad consequences will follow of their misdeeds.

Commonness of *Deen* and Uncommonness of *Sharia*

Thus Abu'l - Kalam Azad has highlighted the non-authoritarian approach of the Qur'an. The commonness of the messages of all prophets and its echo in every human heart consists only of *Din* (Religion) which is belief in one God and doing of good *(Ma'ruf)* deeds and remaining away from bad *(Munkar)* deeds which is the straight Path *(Sirat al-Mustaqim)* as depicted in the Qur'an. Now this commonness of the message does not lie in *Sharias*, because the Sharias of different prophets were different and even the Sharias of the different sects of Islam also are different from one another. Religion should be defined as Deen and not as *Shari'as*, because there will be differences of opinion regarding the different provisions of *Shari'a* while there cannot be any difference regarding *Deen*, as it contains only general principles of Religion which are universally accepted by all human beings, as all human beings are born on the nature of God and God has breathed from His spirit into every human being.

Shari'a of Shi'as is different from that of Sunnis and there are different schools of thought among Sunni brethren as regards *Sharia* as there are among Shia brethren. There are 72 and more sects among Muslims and every sect has got its own views regarding the provisions of *Shari'a*. So the different sects of Muslims cannot be united on the basis of *Shari'a*, as they are different from one another and likewise good Muslims and good non-Muslims also cannot be united for the common lofty purposes on the basis of *Shari'a*. All the sects of Muslims and all good people belonging to different communities can be united for doing good *(Ma'ruf)* deeds only on the basis of *Din* (Religion) which

is common to all sects of Muslims and all religions of the world in their original and purer forms. So, *Sharia* has been changing and should continue to change if *Din* (Religion) is to remain alive. If *Sharia* does not change with the passage of time, then the *Din* becomes lifeless. So, *Ijtehad* based on Din has got a very constructive and historical role to play as regards the reconstruction of *Sharia*.

Mualana Azad's Views on the Nature of *Din* and *Shari'a*

Let us ponder over the thoughts and interpretations as done by Maulana Azad. Maulana Azad has correctly pointed out that the Qur'an has laid emphasis on the difference between *Din* and *Shari'a*, *Din* is eternal while *Shari'a* has been changing. *Din* is the basic structure, *Shari'a* is superstructure. If *Shari'a* does not change alongwith the change of time and space, *Din* cannot be maintained in its pristine purity. In the Qur'an, it is said: "We have made for every community different *Shari'as* (different ways of worship and different social laws) and if God would have desired, He would have made all communities one single community, but God wants to test you through what He has given to you (so do not quarrel on these issues, because they are not basic), but compete with one another in doing good deeds (because that is the basic thing and that is the right religion)."[3] (38:5)

In the Qur'an, it is also stated "Goodness does not lie in whether you turn your face (during prayers) towards the East or towards the West but goodness lies in persons who believe in God and life after death and the Day of Judgment and in angels, in the Books, in prophets and (and as a result of belief and as a proof of it) give alms to the relatives, to the orphans, to the poor and needy people and to the way-farers and to the beggars and use money for freeing the slaves and do prayers and give zakat (charity as a fixed portion of income and wealth) and fulfil the promise and abide by it once they give promise and they are patient in all circumstances of adversity and hardship, they (such persons) are really truthful persons and really they are abstainers from sin and evil"[4] (177:2).

The Qur'an uses the words *'Shara'* and *'Minhaj'* which mean the 'way or ways' i.e. social laws and it uses the word *Nusk* which means the ways of worship. Sometimes, the word *'Shari'a'* includes the meaning of *'Nusk'* also.

In the Qur'an, it is said, "(O Prophet!) We have made for every community a way of worship on which they tread along. So people should not quarrel with you on this issue. (The main thing is that) (you) call all the people towards one God and definitely you are on the right path of guidance."[5] (67:22)

These verses clearly reveal the basic approach of the Qur'an regarding the meaning of religion (Din) and also its attitude towards *Shari'a* and *Nusk*. Religion is eternal and is the same for every community since the days of Adam, and social laws and ways of worship for different communities have been different due to difference in their times and regions and differences in their psychic maturity. Due to change and difference in external circumstances and on account of the difference in their mental and cultural levels, different *Shari'a* and *Nusk* (different social laws and different ways of worship) were required for the expression of the same common Din (Religion). The quarrels between different communities arose on the issue of *Shari'a* and *Nusk*, i.e. on social laws (which include economic and political laws and systems also) and ways of worship and not on the issue of *Din* (Religion) which is universal and common.

But what is *Din* i.e. what is Religion? According to the Qur'an, Religion implies faith in one God and doing of good deeds and avoiding of bad deeds. But what are good deeds and what are bad deeds according to the Qur'an and what is meant by faith in God according to it? Describing the behaviour of the Prophet and good people, the Qur'an points out that they exhort people for doing *'Ma'ruf'* deeds and to abstain from doing *'Munkar'* deeds. The word *'Ma'ruf'* in Arabic language, means universally known and accepted as good deeds by all people of different climes and culture, deeds like helping poor and needy people, speaking truth, earning honest living, spreading of true knowledge etc., and *'Munkar'* deeds are those deeds which are rejected as

bad deeds universally by all the people of all times like harming other people, killing an innocent person, cheating somebody, dishonest living, telling untruth, creating mischief in the society, etc.

That is why in the Qur'an, Prophet is asked "to exhort (people) to do *Ma'ruf* deeds and reject *Munkar* deeds"[6]. (17:31)

Now what is the reason that all human beings agree on certain deeds to be good deeds and certain deeds to be bad deeds? According to the Qur'an, the reason is that every human being is created on the Nature *(Fitrat)* of God, as it is pointed out in Qur'an, '(You) Turn your face towards the real Religion which is the Nature of God on which every human being is created. There is no change in the creation of God. This is the straight and right religion, but many of the people do not understand'[7]. (32: 30)

In the Qur'an, it is also said, 'The spirit of God is breathed into every human being.'[8]

So every human being has been given the inherent capacity to understand basic truth and so he or she knows what is universally true and good and what is universally false and bad. So the Religion is there in the heart (or mind) of every human being. Hence the Prophet from God has been described in the Qur'an as *Bashir* (giver of good tidings) and also as *Nazir* (warner to the doers of bad, i.e. *'Munkar'* deeds) for the people. That is, if you do *Ma'ruf* (good) deeds, he is *Basheer* (giver of good tidings) and if you do *Munkar* (bad) deeds, he is *Nazir* (Warner for the doer of bad deeds).

It has been the weakness of every community that it makes its prophet, God. So to avoid this pitfall, the Qur'an took special care and described Muhammad (peace be on him) as merely the devotee *('Abd)* of and the messenger *(Rasool)* from God so that people do not put Muhammad on par with God or ascribe any divine element in him and associate partnership of Muhammad with God thus committing the sin of *Shirk* as Christian brethren and Hindu brethren have done regarding their own prophets. So the Muslim *Kalimah*, the uttering of which enables a

person to enter into the fold of Islam (if he so desires) is that "There is no god but one God and Muhammad is (only) the messenger of God". In this *Kalimah*, the second part regarding the messengership of Muhammad (peace be on him) is merely supportive of the first part that there is no god, but one God, because Islam was there before Muhammad also, before Jesus Christ and before Moses and before Buddha and Socrates also. It is the same straight path *(Serat al-Mustqim, Al-Din-al-Qayyim, Din al-Hanif)* consisting of faith in one God and doing of good *(Ma'ruf)* deeds and avoiding of bad *(Munkar)* deeds which was emphasised by Abraham (peace be on him) also. Of course the prophet guided and moulded the character of the people on the right lines in the most successful way. But he is *Makhluq* (creation) and not the *Khaliq* (Creator). Only God is the Creator and He is unique and nobody is like Him. He is the definition of Himeself.[9]

So, it is for the embodiment of the universal principles of *Din* that one has to strive for in the society.

Emphasis on the application of *Shari'a* in the social field will create divisions among Muslims, as different Muslim sects have got different *Shari'as*.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah's Views on the Application of *Shari'a* by the state in the Society

Muhammad Aii Jinnah, the creator of Pakistan, wanted Pakistan to be a secular democratic state and that is why he talked about the general principles of Islam, namely freedom, social justice, equity, brotherhood etc. whenever he referred to Islam. Before the creation of Pakistan, in his interview with Doon Campbell, Reuter's correspondent in New Delhi, India in 1946, Jinnah said: '

"The new State (Pakistan) would be a modern democratic state with sovereignty resting in the people and the members of the new nation, having equal rights of citisenship regardless of their religion, caste or creed".

In his famous speech that he delivered as the President of the Constituent Assembly on 11th August 1947, he said in very clear words:

"All the same in this division (partition of India), it was impossible to avoid the question of minorities, being in one dominion or the other. That was unavoidable. There was no solution. Now what shall we do? If you want to make this great state of Pakistan happy and prosperous, we should wholly and solely concentrate on the well-being of the people and especially of masses and the poor. If you will work in co-operation forgetting the past, burying the hatchet, you are bound to succeed. If you change your past and work in a spirit that everyone of you, no matter to what sect he belongs, no matter what relations he had with you in the past, no matter what is his colour, caste or creed, he is first, second and last a citisen of this State with equal rights, privileges and obligations, there will be no end to the progress you will make.

"I cannot emphasise it too much. We should begin to work in that spirit and in course of time all these angularities of the majority community — the Hindu community and the Muslim community — because even as regards Muslims, you have Pathans, Punjabis, Shias, Sunnis and so on, among the Hindus you have Brahmans, Vaishnavites, Kshatris, also Bengalis, Madrasis, and so on — will vanish. Indeed, if you ask me this has been the biggest hindrance in the way of India to attain its freedom and independence. But for this we would have been free people long ago. No power can hold another nation, and especially a nation of 400 million souls in subjection; nobody could have conquered you, and even if it had happened, nobody could have its hold on you for any length of time but for this. *[Applause].* Therefore, we must learn a lesson from this. You are free, you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques, to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed — that has nothing to do with the business of the State *[Hear, hear]*...

"We are starting in the days when there is no discrimination, no distinction between one community and another, no discrimination between one caste or creed or another. We are starting with this fundamental principle

that we are all citisens and equal citizens of one State *[Loud Applause]*.

"Now I think you should keep that in front of us as our ideal, and you will find in course of time, Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual but in the political sense as citizens of the State".

In his broadcast to the United States in 1948, Jinnah said: "I do not know what the ultimate form of the Constitution is going to be, but I am sure, it will be of a democratic type embodying the essential principles of Islam. Today, they are as applicable in actual life as they were 1300 years ago. Islam and its idealism have taught us democracy. It has taught equity, justice and fair play to every body. We are the inheritors of these glorious traditions and are fully alive to our responsibilities".[10]

Dr. Afzal Iqbal, in his book *Islamisation of Pakistan* published from Delhi in 1984, has written that some people, influenced by the *Ulema* who were displeased with this speech of Jinnah, met Jinnah and requested him to introduce *Shari'a* in Pakistan. But Jinnah retorted with the following words:

"Whose *Shari'a*? Hanafi's? Shaf'i's? Hanbali's? Maliki's? or Jafferias? I do not want to get involved. The moment I enter this field, the *Ulema* will take over, for they claim to be experts and I certainly don't prefer to handover the field to them. I am aware of their criticism but I don't propose to fall into their trap."[11]

So, Muhammad Ali Jinnah demanded Pakistan not on religious grounds but on economic, political and social grounds. He demanded partition as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar demanded separate electorates and Reservation for the Dalits (untouchables), Adivasis (tribal people) and other backward classes including religious minorities, i.e. all original inhabitants of India *(Mul Nivasis)*.

Pravez Musharraf's Approach

The present president of Pakistan, Parvez Musharraf,

who possesses the sharpness of the intellect of Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the wisdom of Dr. Muhammad Iqbal has been following the line drawn by Jinnah and Dr. Iqbal, and the people and *ulema* of Pakistan should support him in fighting the cult of pointless violence.

Iqbal's and Shah Waliullah's Views on the Role of *Shari'a* and *Din*

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal also in his famous book *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, has emphasised the necessity of change in *Shari'a* with the change of time and space though *Din* (Religion) remaining the same. He wrote:

"Our modern *Ulema* do not see, that the ultimate fate of a people does not depend so much on organisation as on the worth and power of individual men. In an over-organised society, the individual is altogether crushed out of existence. He gains the whole wealth of social thought around him and loses his own soul. Thus a false reverence for past history and its artificial resurrection constitute no remedy for a people's decay. 'The verdict of history', as a modern writer has happily put it, 'is that worn out ideas have never risen to power among a people who have worn them out'. The only effective power, therefore, that counteracts the forces of decay in a people is the rearing of self-concentrated individuals. Such individuals alone reveal the depth of life. They disclose new standards in the light of which we begin to see that our environment is not wholly inviolable and requires revision. The tendency to over-organisation by a false reverence of the past as manifested in the legists of Islam in the thirteenth century and later, was contrary to the inner impulse of Islam.

"For our present purposes, however, we must distinguish traditions of a purely legal import from those which are of a non-legal character. With regard to the former, there arises a very important question as to how far they embody the pre-Islamic usages of Arabia which were in some cases left intact, and in others modified by the Prophet. It is difficult to make this discovery, for our early writers do not always refer to pre-Islamic usages. Nor is it possible

to discover that the usages, left intact by express or tacit approval of the prophet, were intended to be universal in their application. Shah Waliullah has a very illuminating discussion on the point. I reproduce here the substance of his view.

"The prophetic method of teaching, according to Shah Waliullah, is that, generally speaking, the law revealed by a prophet takes especial notice of the habits, ways, and peculiarities of the people to whom he is specifically sent. The prophet who aims at all embracing principles, however, can neither reveal different principles for different peoples, nor leaves them to work out their own rules of conduct. His method is to train one particular people, and to use them as a nucleus for the building up of a universal *Shari'at*. In doing so he inunciates the principles underlying the social life of all mankind, and applies them to concrete cases in the light of the specific habits of the people immediately before him. The *Shari'at* values *(Ahkam)* resulting from this application (*e.g.*, rules relating to penalties for crimes) are in a sense specific to that people; and since their observance is not an end in itself, they cannot be strictly enforced in the case of future generations. It was perhaps in view of this that Abu Hanifa, who had a keen insight into the universal character of Islam, made practically no use of these traditions. The fact that he introduced the principle of *Istihsan*, i.e., juristic preference, which necessitates a careful study of actual conditions in legal thinking, throws further light on the motives which determined his attitude towards this source of Mohammedan Law. It is said that Abu Hanifa made no use of traditions because there were no regular collections in his days. In the first place, it is not true to say that there were no collections in his days, as the collections of Abdul Malik and Zuhri were made not less than thirty years before the death of Abu Hanifa. But even if we suppose that these collections never reached him, or that they did not contain traditions of a legal import, Abu Hanifa, like Malik and Ahmad ibn Hanbal after him, could have easily made his own collection if he had deemed such a thing necessary. On the whole, then, the attitude of Abu Hanifa towards

the traditions of a purely legal import is to my mind perfectly sound; and if modern liberalism considers it safer not to make any indiscriminate use of them as a source of law, it will be only following one of the greatest exponents of Mohammedan Law in Sunni Islam. It is, however, impossible to deny the fact that the traditionists, by insisting on the value of the concrete case as against the tendency to abstract thinking in law, have done the greatest service to the Law of Islam. And a further intelligent study of the literature of traditions, if used as indicative of the spirit in which the Prophet himself interpreted his Revelation, may still be of great help in understanding the life-value of the legal principles enunciated in the Qur'an. A complete grasp of their life-value alone can equip us in our endeavour to re-interpret the foundational principles.

"The transfer of the power of *Ijtihad* from individual representatives of schools to a Muslim legislative assembly which, in view of the growth of opposing sects, is the only possible form Ijma can take in modern times, will secure contributions to legal discussion from laymen who happen to possess a keen insight into affairs. In this way alone, we can stir into activity the dormant spirit of life in our legal system, and give it an evolutionary shape as it was permitted even in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. The closing of the door of *Ijtihad* is pure fiction suggested partly by the crystallisation of legal thought in Islam, and partly by that intellectual laziness which, especially in the period of spiritual decay, turns great thinkers into idols. If some of the later doctors have upheld this fiction, modern Islam is not bound by this voluntary surrender of intellectual independence. Al-Sarakhsi writing in the tenth century of the Hijra rightly observes: "If the upholders of this fiction mean that the previous writers had more facilities, while the later writers had more difficulties in their way, it is nonsense; for it does not require much understanding to see that *Ijtihad* for later doctors is easier than for the earlier doctors. Indeed the commentaries on the Qur'an and *Sunnah* have been compiled and multiplied to such an extent that the *Mujtahid* of today has more material for interpretation than he needs.

"Humanity needs three things today, a spiritual interpretation of the universe, spiritual emancipation of the individual and basic principles of a universal import directing the evolution of human society on a spiritual basis.

"Let the Muslim of today appreciate his position, reconstruct his social life in the light of ultimate principles, and evolve, out of the hitherto partially revealed purpose of Islam, that spiritual democracy which is the ultimate aim of Islam."[12]

References

1. Al-Qur'an (40:78)
2. *Ibid.*, (30:30-31)
3. *Ibid.*, (38:5)
4. Al-Qur'an (177:2)
5. *Ibid.*, (67:22)
6. *Ibid.*, (17:31)
7. *Ibid.*, (32:30)
8. *Ibid.*, (38: 72)
9. *Ibid.*, (112:1-4)
10. Munir, Muhammad (Ex-chief Justice, the Supreme Court of Pakistan) *From Jinnah to Zia* (Document Press, New Delhi, India) pp. 52-54.
11. Afzal Iqbal, *Islamisation of Pakistan* (Delhi, India) p. 25.
12. Iqbal, Muhammad, *op. cit.*, pp. 151, 171-173, 178, 179.

9

Some Important Concepts, Terminologies and Theories in Islam

Here we would like to discuss the meaning of certain important Terminologies and Concepts as used in the Qur'an and the implied theories thereof. Let us discuss them one by one.

Law of Requital

Just as there are different laws working in Nature, in the same way, there is the law of human actions also. This law of human action and its recompense may be termed as the Law of Requittal. If a person does good deeds of helping other human beings or does them with an honest sense of duty and for the pleasure of God i.e. doing them as efforts to fulfil the absolute moral or spiritual values which reflect the qualities *(Sifat)* of God, then he or she is surly to get a good reward. This is because his personality *(Khudi)* is in the making and good deeds with good intentions help a person to participate in the wider life of God and thereby he or she becomes one with God, and this meeting with God, strengthens his personality (his Ego in the healthy sense) which again increases his capacity to get happiness even from simple things of life. This is the

beginning of Paradise *(Jannat)* for him. *Niyyat* or purpose is important, because when it is lofty and a person tries through his good deeds, to put the qualities of mercy *(Karuna* or love) of God (as God is Rabb — and Provider, Rahman and Rahim — Merciful and Compassionate) into action, there is a healthy effect on his personality and it gets strengthened.

A Muslim and a Momin

A Muslim can be a *Munafiq* also and every non-Muslim is not necessarily a *Kafir*, he can be an unconscious Momin (a person having faith) also and the Qur'an guarantees paradise to Momins and not only to Muslims.

There is *Iman bi'l-Lisan* (faith by tongue, i.e. uttering and expressing belief in the logos *(Kalimah)* that there is no god but one God and Muhammad is (only) the messenger of God. *Iman bi'l-Qalb* (faith in the heart) and *Iman bil-Amal* (faith expressed through doing of good deeds and remaining away from bad deeds). It is possible that a Muslim may stop with faith with the tongue and he may not have faith in his heart and therefore he may be also devoid of faith in his actions. Thus it is possible that a Muslim may be a surfacial believer in one God only and there may be idolworship in his heart which may draw him to bad deeds. In the same way, it is also possible that a non-Muslim may be an idol-worshipper, but his idol-worship may be only skin-deep and he may have deep faith in one God in his heart, of which he may not be sufficiently conscious or aware and his actions may be good *(M'aruf)*. Who is better?

Secondly, God is not communal: He is *Rabb al 'Alamin* (Provider for all mankind and all the worlds and not *Rabb al-Muslemin* only and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is *Rahmat li'l-'Alameen* (mercy for whole mankind and all the worlds) and not *Rahmat li'l-Muslemin* only.

In the 'Qur'an, it is said, "They say that only Jews will go to Paradise and Christians say only Christians will enter Paradise. But these are their wishes (only). If they are truthful, let them bring their arguments and proofs. But

whoever turns his face to God and his actions are good, there is reward for him with God. And there will not be any fear or disappointment for him."[1]

In the Qur'an, it is also said, "People who are Muslims, Jews, Christians or Star-worshippers, whoever is a believer in God and the Day of Judgement and does good deeds, there will be reward for him with God and there will not be any fear or disappointment for him."[2]

Even an atheist, who is a believer in absolute humanitarian and moral values which are of universal nature, is an unconscious Mu'min (Believer), because these absolute moral values reflect the qualities *(Sifat)* of God. It is difficult to understand the Self of God, but just as God's Self is unique, in the same way, His Attributes also are unique. So acceptance of absolute moral values is just like acceptance of God through belief in His attributes. So such a moral and humanitarian atheist whose actions are good and who does them not for any worldly gain, but for their own sake, and for getting a sort of spiritual satisfaction, he is like an unconscious *Mu'min* and he will enter into paradise. Of couse, if he consciously accepts one God, his capacity to do good deeds will be enhanced. The same applies to an idol-worshipper also.

Broadly speaking, there is a difference between a Muslim and a *Mu'min*, though sometimes, the beginning and the climax in the spiritual climbing process of a Muslim and a *Mu'min* have been shown to be the same in the Qur'an. Etymological meaning of a Muslim is one who submits to the laws or qualities *(Sifat)* of God, i.e. to God and attains peace in his or her relations with Nature, other human beings and with his or her own unconscious self. While the word '*Mu'min*' means a person in whose heart there is pulsating faith which implies a sort of spiritual experience on his or her part or oneness with God. But broadly, in the light of the Teachings of Qur'an and Hadith, we can say that technically, a Muslim is that person who utters the *Kalimah* that there is no god but one God and Muhammad is (only) the messenger of God and he or she believes himself or herself to be a Muslim. But many times, we do make a distinction between a formal Muslim and a real Muslim.

Real Muslim is not different from a *Mu'min*. *Mu'min* is a person with *Iman* (faith) in his heart and so he is having spiritual experience and so his deeds are also humanitarian and good ones. Without *Iman*, good deeds are not possible. So we can also say that if there are good deeds done not with worldly intentions but for the pleasure of God i.e., emanating from his absolute moral values which reflect the qualities *(Sifat)* of God, then he must be having *Iman* (faith) in his heart though he may not be necessarily conscious of it. So he can be termed as the unconscious *Mu'min*. Some Muslims are good, some non-Muslims are good, some Muslims are bad, some Non-Muslims are bad. All good Muslims and all good non-Muslims are *Mu'mins* and all bad Muslims and all bad non-Muslims are not *Mu'mins*, and paradise or success in this life and in the Hereafter is guaranteed to *Mu'mins* and not necessarily to Muslims, in the Qur'an. So every non-Muslim is not necessarily a *Kafir* (a non-believer), he or she may be an unconscious *Mu'min* (believer) also if he or she does good deeds with pure intentions. Also every Muslim is not necessarily a *Mu'min*. He may be so or he may not be so.

The etymological meaning of the word '*Kafir*' is one who denies the bounties and mercies of God on him and all other human beings and all other creatures. A person who does not thank God by not seeing the signs of God in Nature, in himself and in the history of mankind and hence does bad deeds with evil intentions, he is a *Kafir*. So every bad man is a *Kafir* (non-believer) and every good man is a *Mu'min* (a believer) in the etymological sense. But technically speaking, a person who considers himself or herself to be a Muslim and utters the *Kalimah* that there is no god but one God and Muhammad is (only) the messenger of God, he or she is a Muslim. He or she as a specific person cannot be called a *Kafir* (non-believer) by any person or institution. *Etymological meaning is meant for private understanding and the technical meaning is meant for social understanding.*

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal has described the signs of a *Mu'min* and those of a *Kafir* in the light of the Qur'an in his couplets in the following manner.

"The sign of a *Kafir* is that he is lost in the world while the sign of a *Mu'min* is that the world is lost unto him".

The personality of a *Mu'min* (a believer) is so powerful (which has become so due to his good deeds done with honest intentions) that the entire world (which is created by God to serve Man) is lost into him. Iqbal in his foreword to the translation in English of the collection of his poems named as *Asrar-i Khudi (Secrets of Self)* done by Nicholson, says that "In Islamic Sufism, it is not like this that the finite (individual) loses itself (or himself or herself) into the Infinite (God), but rather the Infinite passes into the loving embrace of the finite." He further says, 'Plato taught us to run away from matter, but Islam teaches us to absorb Matter'. So, it is the basic approach of Islam that the sincere belief in one God strengthens human personality and it thereby increases his or her capacity to get happiness and to bear cheerfully the vissicitudes of worldly life.

Meaning of Belief in God

Belief in God means belief in the Self of God and His Attributes. But it is very difficult to understand the infinite Self of God and so some people may take the qualities *(Sifat)* of God as the absolute moral values to be lived in life. God is merciful, compassionate, does justice and so we, human beings, also should be full of mercy *(karuna)* for other human beings and creatures and thus we should try to imbibe the qualities of God to whatever extent that it is possible for us to do so. So, some people may approach the Self of God through His Attributes and thus accept general moral values as absolute values and not as relative values. Instead of saying that God is truth, they may say, like Mahatma Gandhi, that truth is God and thus Truth may be accepted as the living principle to be followed in one's life. Of course, if a person consciously believes in the Self of God also alongwith His Attributes, his or her capacity to do good actions and to remain away from bad deeds will increase, and consequently his or her capacity to get happiness also will be enhanced. This is what Islam ultimately wants. But if somebody stops at the Attributes of God (even without naming them as the attributes of God)

and takes realisation of absolute humanitarian values in life as the purpose of one's life. Islam welcomes it and supports it as the unconscious belief in God. Such people are unconscious *Mu'mins* though the world may consider them to be atheists. Good Buddhists are unconscious *Mu'mins*. This is because it is difficult for human beings to make, in reality, the distinction between the Self of God and the Attributes of God.

God is unique and unlike any other being and so He can be experienced or a glimpse of Him can be had by participating in His life through following His Attributes in one's own life sincerely and accepting general humanitarian values as absolute moral values (which reflect the qualities of God) and moulding one's life, thinking and deeds according to these general absolute spiritual values.

Mankind was one but it has divided itself into many communities, races, nations and all other sorts or groups. But the excellent person in the eyes of God is one who is pure in deed and in mind[3].

God is One, mankind is one and so Religion for mankind is also one, as science is common for all human beings. Just as science is a method and an attitude, in the same way, Religion also is an attitude and a method according to Islam. So, Islam also is an attitude and a method. So, pure monotheism and adherence to absolute humanitarian values is the beginning in terms of the application of the method. One may say that it is the method itself. Science leads to observation and experimentation, in the same way, Religion also leads to experience, meditation, measuring and thinking. Just as science does not give any final conclusions, in the same way, it is not the function of Religion to give any final conclusions. The finality of prophethood does not mean this. Finality of prophethood means the end of Authority as the source of knowledge and making man self-dependent and reliant on his own self and bearing the burden on his or her own shoulders. The function of Religion (according to the Qur'an) is to help and enable the human beings to experience God by following the Attributes of God in life and thereby to strengthen personality and enhance the capacity to discover

truth and to get genuine happiness and peace in their lives. So the aim of life is not only to know something, but to become something, as Iqbal also nicely puts it. Becoming also gives knowledge and knowledge helps in ascending higher orders of becoming and thus, it is a virtuous circle of becoming and knowing.

When we study matter in physics and chemistry, scientific method is of one type and it is different when we study life in biology, and it is further different when we study human mind in psychology. In social sciences, it is still different. Thus though the different sciences adopt different scientific methods, they all are commonly termed as scientific methods, because all these methods make use of the common scientific attitude which is an objective, non-monopolistic, democratic and open attitude. Thus scientific attitude is a moral and spiritual attitude and all scientific methods are called scientific ones, because they all adopt scientific attitude. In science, nobody argues on the basis of authority and nobody is final and truth is important and the science is important and not the scientist. The scientist does not argue that he is a great scientist and, therefore, the truth of what he says, is to be accepted on that basis. He appeals to facts and our reasoning. He experiments and observes and brings to light data and facts to support his theory. He simply delivers the message, he does not impose the message. There is no monopoly, it is open to all and there is free competition of ideas and there is appeal to facts (obtained from experiments and/ or observation) and to reasoning. So, in science now, there is no quarrel and there is peaceful competition of ideas, peaceful and co-operative pursuit of truth, because the scientific attitude springs from within the heart and mind of every human being and there is no imposition of authority from without by other human beings and, so in the long run, there is peaceful agreement, as there is appeal to human reasoning and experience which is common to all human beings. While appeal to authority and imposition from without, does not create conviction in the heart and the imposed theories move in opposite and conflicting directions which lead to intolerance and blood-shed in the

society. This happens, because there is no common ground of appeal to facts (attained through experimentation and observation) and reasoning and there is imposition from without on the ground of authority.

Islam wanted to oppose all kinds of authoritarianism in religion, science, philosophy and in all fields of society. That is why Islam opposed worship of Nature, of human beings and one's own selfishness. God is the Creator and all other beings and things are creation and so only the Creator deserves worship. Man is created by God as the limited sub-creator and he is made the *Khalifah*, i.e. vicegerent on earth to use the universe in his service. So he should not degrade himself by worshipping anybody or anything of his servants which all the things of the universe, in fact, are. He should worship one God only who is the Creator of Man and of all the beings and things in the universe. He becomes one with God by worshipping Him and thereby rejuvenates and enhances his spiritual vitality which enables him to bear the hardships of life with patience and fortitude. When he bows down before God within, he cannot bow down before anybody or anything else and thus he becomes free. God is to be realised within one's own heart by every human being and so, there is no authority in one's relationship with God and the universe.

Though God is immanent in everything (because without God, nothing can survive) and the whole universe exists in Him, His personality can be appealed, worshipped and experienced only transcendentally. So Islam preaches monotheism and not monism, it is the theory of monontism alongwith transcedence of God.

All knowledge is based on experience which is systematised by intellect and so it takes the form of knowledge. In science, experience is got or attained by experiments and observation. In the same way, in Religion, one gets spiritual experience of becoming one with God (the ultimate Reality) by praying to Him and by helping other needy human beings and creatures and by honest living and working and sacrificing property and life for the sake of Truth, Justice and Goodness (i.e. God). These good deeds make Man one with God and impart spiritual

experience to him from which, knowledge about God, self of man and life after death emerges. There are different stages on the path of spiritual progress which have been highlighted by eminent Sufis.

The Qur'an described many of the Jews of those days as the worshippers of their doctors of law and their ascetics. Some companions asked Prophet Muhammad that they (Jews) did not worship any actual idols. Prophet Muhammad, in reply, pointed out that they were accepting the opinions of their doctors of law and ascetics as correct on the ground of their authority without examining the validity or non-validity of their opinions. So to accept the thoughts or opinions of anybody without taking the trouble of examining the validity or non-validity of these thoughts and opinions is *Shirk* (idol-worship) according to the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him). According to the Qur'an, to follow the selfish desires (without taking into account their long-term harmful consequences in this world and the hereafter) is also *Shirk*, i.e. idol-worship (of these baser passions). Your aims of life and your actual deeds will clarify what you actually are and not your words only!

In Islam, idol-worship is synonymous with authoritarianism and exploitation practised by the so called custodians of the idols of various types in the form of stone, money, state, nation, community, religion, book, idea of God etc. The pure concept of one unique God (without any partner) is meant to be common for all the strata of the people. Here all human beings are equal and this is the beginning in the right direction. But there are different stages of spiritualism and closeness to God for different individuals of different levels. So when a Muslim starts with the logos *(Kaliemah)* that 'There is no god but one God', the Muslim Sufi ends with the logos 'there is no being except one God' *(Wahdat al-Wujud)*. This is the logical development of Islamic spiritualism based on pure Monotheism. So monotheism opens the door for Man to have spiritual experience and so it is the beginning of experience and not an end. In order to keep away from dogmatism, authoritarianism and intolerance away from Islam, philosophy and Sufism — both are necessary. Imam

Ghazali supported Sufism and highlighted its importance in knowing Truth, but opposed philosophy with the help of philosophy itself. It is true that in philosophy, some people go to the extreme as they do in science and religion also, but it does not mean that we should deprecate and banish philosophy from Islam and study only words of the Qur'an and Hadith without taking into account the spirit working behind them and their integrated approach as a whole. Just as we do not banish the study of science, despite the destructive use of science, and do not banish the study of religion despite the mischief-mongering by some religious doctors of creating sectarian feuds among Muslims in the name of Islam, the philosophy — Islamic, Western and Eastern should also have been studied as a regular part of the syllabus.

Meaning of *Shirk* (Idol-worship)

Islam is opposed to *shirk*, i.e. associating anybody or anything with one God and deem it to be a great sin, only because Islam wanted to abolish authoritarianism from religion and from life as it comes in the way of spiritual experience of God.

In the Qur'an, God is described to be unique in His Self and also in His Attributes. Nobody or nothing is like Him in the Universe and as the Qur'an says that He is the definition of Himself. The Qur'an also says that He is the First and the Last and He is nearer to Man than even his own jugular vein.[4] In the Qur'an it has been also pointed out that wherever you turn your face, you will find God there. In the Qur'an, it is also said that there is no intermediary between Man and God and Man is asked to pray to one God only directly and to seek help also directly from Him.

This shows that God is to be experienced internally by every individual, and hence any outside agent between Man and God, becomes a hindrance in experiencing God. Of course, some Muslims may be only formal believers in one God and inside, they may be idol-worshippers while there are some non-Muslims also who are formal idol-worshippers but in their hearts, they may be believers in

one God. So, Islam's opposition to *shirk* i.e. associating others with one God, if understood properly, implies stern opposition to authoritarianism which implies solid support to human freedom. Thus, according to Islam, Freedom is the basic moral value. Bowing down before one God *(Sijdah)* in Islam, implies not bowing down to anybody or anything else. This is because, God is the Ultimate Reality and so ultimate praise also is to be reserved for God only. So, no human being can be praised so much as to equate him with God, this leads to mental slavery.

Worldly things like money and political power cannot be the aims of life. They are good servants, but bad masters. The aim of life can be only meeting God i.e. experiencing transcandental God in every being as He is immanent also. This requires the sincere acceptance of the qualities *(Sifat)* of God as the ideal to be realised in our behavior. Of course, we can imbibe only something of His Attributes in our lives, but we should always continue our efforts to approximate more and more to them as we are from Him and His spirit is breathed into us and we all have to return to Him.

Meaning of *Iman* (Faith) in Islam

The word 'Imandar' which means a person who possesses 'Iman' or Faith is used in Gujarati, Urdu and Hindi languages for a good and honest person who does good deeds with honest intentions irrespective of whether he or she is a Muslim or a non-Muslim. So in the common parlance as understood by common Muslims and common non-Muslims, 'Iman' means good action done with good and pure intentions. But this kind of use of the word 'Iman' is not accidental. It is the direct result of the approach taken in the Qur'an and also in Hadith (the sayings of Prophet Muhammad) and their teachings. This is the cultural result of the basic spiritual teachings of Islam.

In a Hadith narrated by Bukhari in 'Kitab al-Iman', it is stated that when a companion of Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) described some person who had become a Muslim that he has become a *Mu'min* (believer in faith), Prophet Muhammad corrected him and said that he was a Muslim and the companion was repeatedly corrected by

the Prophet and that person was described as a Muslim by the Prophet whenever the companion described him as a *Mu'min*[5] *(Bukhari* 2:19). This is because nobody knows whether Iman (Faith) has really entered into his heart or not and only God knows about it. Man becomes a Muslim when he or she utters the *Kalemah* that 'There is no god but one God and Muhammad is the prophet of God. This utterance of the *Kalimah* is an outward act which enables a person to enter into the fold of Islam. So this is the technical position about his or her being a Muslim.

According to another Hadith as reported by Bukhari, Prophet Muhammad said, "Three things are the basis of faith: To withhold from one who confesses faith in 'There is no god but one God *(La ilaha illa-Allah)*, calling him *Kafir* for any sin, or expelling him from Islam for any deed'[6]. *(Sunan Abu Dawud* 15:33). So one important basis of faith is not to declare some one to be a non-Muslim who declares himself or herself to be a Muslim. According to a Hadith (as reported by Ibn 'Umar) "Whoever calls the people of 'There is no god but one God' *Kafir*, he himself is a *Kafir*". Thus a person is a true Muslim or not, is a question between that person and God only. Other persons, however, learned theologians or pious persons they may be, they have no right to declare somebody a non-Muslim who declares himself or herself to be a Muslim. That is the right of God only which He will exercise on the Day of Judgement. No human being can condescend to the level of trying to usurp the right of God which only God is going to exercise on the Day of Judgement. So, the legal aspect of a certain person being a Muslim or not is whether he declares himself or herself to be a Muslim or not. If he or she does so, he or she is a Muslim and is to be accepted as so by other Muslims and non-Muslims legally and morally.

Abu al-Hasan Isma'il ibn 'Ali al-Ash'ari in his book, *Maqalat al-Islamiyyin* wrote: "After the death of the Prophet, Muslims got divided on many points, some of them calling others as moving away from the right path and excluded others, so that they became separate sects and separate groups, but Islam brings them together and included them all in its fold'[7]. This is the basic principle developed by

Ash'ari and describing the situation prevalent in his times, he takes note of the fact that the Muslims are divided into Shia, Mutazilla, Khuwarij, Murjia etc. and their subdivisions among these sects or groups. Shias are subdivided into the sub-groups of Ghaliya, Rafidza, and Zaidiya. Rafidza have again twenty-four separate sects, Zaidiya have six sub-groups and Ghaliya consists of fifteen sects. Khwariji are also subdivided into fifteen groups. Mutazallites and Murjia also have their own sub-groups. Ash'ari, in the beginning, was a Mutzallite and was very broad-minded, but afterwards, he left this group and took a dogmatic position. But even he does not consider these different sects to be out of the fold of Islam and says emphatically that they all are included in the fold of Islam, though the beliefs of some of them were very unusual and may be considered to go against some beliefs which are deemed as fundamental by some Muslims.

The word 'Iman' has been derived from the root *'amana'* which means 'he came into peace' and so the word '*Mu'min*' i.e., a believer means one who has come into peace.

In the Qur'an, it is stated: "The dwellers of the desert say, we believe, say, you do not believe but say, we submit; and faith (Iman) has not yet entered into your hearts."[8] When faith enters into one's heart he or she becomes the reflection of the Attributes of God in his or her deeds and in his or her entire personality.

It means that the Qur'an accepts them as Muslims though (real) Iman (faith) has not yet entered into their hearts. Thus it is possible that all Muslims may not be necessarily *Mu'mins* though they may be on the path towards it[9] (For further discussion, please refer to Maulana Muhammad Ali's book *The Religion of Islam*).

Now if we take into account the sayings of the Prophet, we find the same point emphasised in greater detail.

It is reported by Abu Umamah that in reply to a question by some persons about Iman (faith) the Prophet replied: 'When you become happy with your doing of good deeds and be unhappy with your bad deeds, then you are a believer' (one who has faith) i.e. a *Mu'min*.

Prophet Muhammad had said: 'Iman has over sixty branches, the highest of which is the belief that nothing deserves to be worshipped except one God and the lowest of which is the removal from the way of that which may cause injury to some one.'[10] (*Al-Sahih* of Muslim). In another Hadith, he is quoted as saying 'Iman has over sixty branches and modesty is a branch out of these branches', He is also reported to have said, "One of them has no faith unless he loves for his brother what he loves for himself"[11] (*Al-Sahih* of Bukhari). As reported by Abu Hurairah, the Prophet said, 'Out of the believers, that believer's faith is most perfect who is the best in virtues.'[12]

As reported by Abu Hurairah, the Prophet said, 'Believer (faithful, *Mu'min*) is that from whom the lives and properties of others remain safe.'[13]

Hazrat Anas reported Prophet as saying: 'A person who lacks honesty has no Iman and a person who does not fulfil or act according to his promise, he has no religion.'[14]

Hazrat Ibn 'Abbas reported Prophet Muhammad as saying: 'That person is not a *Mu'min* who eats full while his neighbour remains hungry.'[15]

Iman (Faith) on one hand and virtue and good deeds on the other cannot be separated from each other. Without Iman, good deeds cannot follow and if there are good deeds, Iman must be there in that doer of good deeds though he or she may not be conscious of it.

Here, there is no difference between a Muslim and a non-Muslim, anybody — Muslim or non-Muslim if he or she does good deeds with good intentions, he or she will be rewarded with peace and happiness, and one who does bad deeds, he or she will be punished and he or she will be unhappy and will lack peace of mind.

This is the Law of God which is common for all human beings. God cannot be communal. The Qur'an says that He is the God and Providence of all human beings and all the worlds.

In the Qur'an it is also said, 'People who are believers, (Muslims) and the Jews and the Christians and the star-

worshippers, if they have faith in God and in the Day of Judgement and they do good deeds, they will have reward with God and they will not have any grief or repentance."[16]

It is also said in the Qur'an: "Among the people of the book, there is a group of people who pray to God during the night and they bow down their heads before God and they have faith in God and the Day of Judgement and they exhort to do good deeds and stop from doing bad deeds and they hurry up in doing good deeds and they are the virtuous people. Whatever, good deeds of helping others that they do, they will not be rejected and Allah is aware of the God-fearing people."[17]

The above-mentioned verses show that among the people of the Book, i.e. among Jews and Christians and others also, there are persons who are promised good reward for their good deeds and for their God-fearing attitude though they are not Muslims. The Qur'an has described them as 'Muttaqin' and 'Salehun'.

In the Qur'an, it is said, 'In every community, there has been sent a warner.'[18]

It is also pointed out in Qur'an, 'Jews say that only Jews will enter into paradise and Christians say that only Christians will enter into paradise. But these are their wishes. Say, bring your arguments if you are true. But one who turned his face towards God and he (or she) is good in deeds, there is reward for them and there is no fear or grief for them.'[19]

The above-mentioned verses of the Qur'an show that any human being, to whatever community, race or nation he or she may belong to, but if he or she does good deeds and helps others without worldly intentions, but to please God only, then they will get salvation i.e. they will enter into paradise and they will be successful and happy in this life and also in the Hereafter.

That is why it is stated in the Qur'an: 'He who has done an atom's weight of good, shall see it; and he who has done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it.'[20]

This is the promise of God and thus we observe that

the Qur'an's approach is humane and universal. God of the Qur'an is the Provider of all nations and all communities *(Rabb al-'alamin)* and the prophet of Islam is mercy from God for all people *(Rahmat lil-'alamin)*. The Qur'an declares that God cannot be communal or show favouritism to one special community irrespective of the deeds and intentions of the members of that community. Law of God is the same for all.

Every individual, on the Day of Judgement, will be judged individually according to his deeds and intentioins *(niyyat)*, though in this world, the members of the community may suffer as a unit or as one group jointly due to bad actions of some people who were not prevented from their bad deeds by other good people of that group. So every non-Muslim is not necessarily a *Kafir* (non-believer), he or she may be an unconscious *Mu'min* (believer) if he or she is a good person in behaviour with honest and spiritually lofty intentions.

Iman (Faith) as a Principle of Action

In Islam, Iman (Faith) is a principle of action. So when we say that we believe in God, it means that we accept the qualities or attributes of God to be the aims to be realised in our lives. In the same way, when we believe in prophets of God, it means that we accept the characters of the prophets to be the ideals to be followed in action. When we believe in angels, it means that we make it a point to follow the good promtings given by angels for doing good deeds in our lives. When we believe in life after death, it means that we believe that we are to suffer the consequences of bad or good deeds now or after sometime in this life and in life after death, though we cannot say anything intellectually about the nature of life after death except in the form of some allegories. The Qur'an asks us to disbelieve in Satan. This shows that according to the Qur'an, Iman does not necessarily mean the acceptance of the existence of a certain thing, but accepting it as a principle of action in our lives. That is why faith and action go together in Islam Without faith, there is no good action

and if good actions are there, the performer of these good deeds must be having faith, if not consciously, at least unconsciously. So even a non-Muslim can be an unconscious *Mu'min*, likewise if a Muslim does bad deeds, then it means that his faith is weak and dim. Thus the Laws of God are universal and the Qur'an gives expression to them.

Meaning of Beliefs in Life after Death, Angels, Prophets and Books

Let us first discuss the belief in Life after Death in some greater detail and try to understand its meaning and implications.

Life After Death

Belief in life after death is also not a dogma, but it imparts meaning to life and purpose to life. One who believes in God, should not find it difficult of believe in life after death. Human life is the best creation of God. If life is not an accident and it has got some meaning, then there is God in which we and the whole universe live as sub-egos of different levels. Man is the vicegerent of God on earth. Such a precious life like that of the human being, cannot come to an abrupt end when it took million of years for that life to come into being in the present shape. A second or a day of God may be equal to million of years for human beings. When human life was not there and it was created by God, then how is it difficult for Him to create it again? This is a powerful argument of the Qur'an which should lay at rest all the doubts that are raised against the belief in life after death. Our spiritual and intuitive experience also supports the belief in life after death if we are ready to hear the voice of our own conscience. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal explained the phenomenon of death and life after death as follows:

"Philosophically speaking, therefore, we cannot go farther than this — that in view of the past history of man it is highly improbable that his career should come to an end with the dissolution of his body.

"However, according to the teaching of the Qur'an, the

ego's re-emergence brings him a 'sharp sight' (50:21) whereby he clearly sees his self-built 'fate fastened round his neck'. Heaven and Hell are states, not localities. Their descriptions in the Qur'an are visual representations of an inner fact, i.e. character. Hell, in the words of the Qur'an, is God's kindled fire which mounts above the hearts' — the painful realisation of one's failure as a man; heaven is the joy of triumph over the forces of disintegration. There is no such thing as eternal damnation in Islam. The word 'eternity' used in certain verses, relating to Hell, is explained by the Qur'an itself to mean only a period of time (78: 23). Time cannot be wholly irrelevant to the development of personality. Character tends to become permanent; its reshaping must require time. Hell, therefore, as conceived by the Qur'an, is not a pit of everlasting torture inflicted by a revengeful God, it is corrective experience which may make a hardened ego once more sensitive to the living breese of Divine Grace. Nor is Heaven a holiday. Life is one and continuous. Man marches always onward to receive ever fresh illuminations from an Infinite Reality which 'every moment appears in a new glory'. And the recipient of divine illumination is not merely a passive recipient. Every act of a free ego creates a new situation, and thus offers further opportunities of creative unfolding."[21]

Islam did away with the wilest superstitions and grossest ignorance within a very short period of time and emphasised the great importance of all kinds of knowledge. It also opposed all kinds of cruelty and social injustice, and insisted for working with vigour for the establishment of social justice in the society and preached as its main focus the unity of mankind and the establishment of human brotherhood.

Islam removed the divinity of inanimate objects and animate objects and of human beings by making a sharp division between the Creator *(Khaliq)*, i.e. Allah and the creatures *(Makhluq)* which includes all inanimate and animate objects and human beings (including prophets). Only the Creator *(Khaliq)* has divinity and nothing or nobody from creation *(Makhluq)* has got any divinity. So there is no authority except that of God. But even the

authority of God operates through the heart *(Qalb)* of Man i.e. through individual human conscience in the form of the voice of conscience. Revelation to the prophets and the non-prophets comes to the human conscience. Thus divinity for all the things and from God's every creation is denied in the transcendental sense and hence in the sense of being worthy of being worshipped and being accepted as authority. Everything and everybody is a part of God, but not entire God Himself i.e. not the transcendental centre of God which alone is to be worshipped. Ibn 'Arabi, the 'promulgator of the theory of *Wahdat al-Wujud* (Unity of Being) had argued that just as the finger or any part of human body is not that person himself, in the same way, nothing from God's creation can be called God. This establishes human freedom and relieves Man from all kinds of slavery and lays the foundation of unity of mankind and human brotherhood.

Belief in one Unique God with His Unique Attributes is the central belief in Islam and then next comes another most important belief in life after death. Islam rejects the theory of re-incarnation of soul and so there is no coming back to the stage of the earth that has been already passed. But there is the *'Alam-i Barzakh* before the Day of Judgement when the earth, the sun, the moon and other stars will collide and the world will be destroyed and then there will be new creation and the human beings will get the new body in consonance with the higher stage. There will be hell, which, as an expression of the mercy of God, will purify the human soul of the bad effects of the evil deeds that he or she might have committed in the present life. It will be very painful, but in the long run, in the interests of the soul, as he or she, after sometime (in accordance with the gravity of the weakness of the soul) will be taken out from hell as then he or she would have been purified and hence will be fit for entering into paradise. That is why the Qur'an describes Hell as the mother and the friend of the temporary dweller of Hell, Paradise is the condition for eternal progress and strengthening of personality which will enhance the individual capacity for attaining happiness and higher stages of the next world which will not be inconsistent with the lower stages of the earth. But just

as the child in the condition of human embryo in the womb of the mother cannot have the idea of life on this earth, in the same way, we cannot have a very clear idea of the nature of 'human' life after death and of the Day of Judgement. But the above description is a mere glimpse imparted on account of spiritual experience and due to some sort of revelation from God. But revelation is according to one's capacity and so certain things of life after death cannot be much understood in this life. If life is not an accident, then it has a meaning and, in that case, life after death is a certainty because without that, present life has no meaning.

Belief in one Unique God with His Unique Attributes and belief in life after death are based on universal spiritual experience of human beings. But the prophets, specially the last prophet Muhammed (peace be on him), clarified the pure and non-anthropomorphic concept of God and the true nature of life after death, devoid of superstitious accretions around it. Thus these beliefs are not dogmas to be accepted blindly, but are based on unconscious spiritual experience of Man which are now to be accepted at the conscious level of Reason so that the conscious and the unconscious levels of mind get integrated and new constructive energy is released for the transformation of the individual lives, and the reconstruction of society on humanitarian and productive lines and thus changing human history. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal rightly pointed out in his *Reconstruction* that the proof of the existence of God is to be seen in the historical achievements of such human beings who are spiritually inspired or awakened.

MEANING OF BELIEF IN ANGELS, PROPHETS AND BOOKS

Belief in Angels

There are other important beliefs mainly in the angels, prophets and revealed books as mentioned in the Qur'an. Angels are agencies of God who incline Man towards doing good deeds with good intentions so that when a person pays heed to these inclinations and acts accordingly, it

means that he or she believes in the angels. Belief is not a dogma to be uttered by tongue only, but it is a principle of action to be lived accordingly. So a person who acts according to good inclinations as developing from within, he or she may be called a believer (Momin) in angels.

Belief in Prophets

In the same way, belief in prophets means to accept their high moral character as a general guide and take it as an aim to be realised in one's own life and then to become socially active in the service of human beings in the light of these teachings. Prophet follows the Laws of God and so we should follow those Laws of God, that is belief in the prophets.

Belief in Books

Belief in revealed books also implies the conscious acceptance of the general and common principles as highlighted in these revealed books, as the basis of individual and social action.

Whatever good inclinations that are made by the angels and the common and universal principles that are adumbrated in the revealed books and the characters of the prophets, they all appeal to individual human conscience, and human conscience, like the voice of God from within, (in the normal conditions) accepts these principles and guidelines as the basis of action, as every human being is born on the nature of God and as God has breathed from His Spirit into every human being and hence human conscience echoes the same moral values as pointed out by the Qur'an itself.

Meaning of Meeting with God

Bertrand Russell in his famous book *Conquest of Happiness* maintained that happiness is to be conquered and the way to conquer it is that man should become one with Nature, one with Society (i.e. other human beings) and one with his own self. Of course the phrase 'to be one with nature, one with society and one with one's own

self' contains mystical words which can be explained only spiritually and not materially though uttered by an atheist or an agnostic who believed only in the scientific and the philosophical method and considered everything else to be either superstitious or hypothetical.

In another book, *Ethics in Human Society and Politics*, Bertrand Russell tried to prove scientifically and objectively why good is good, but he could not do so and his failure was just like the failure of Prof. William Moore whose efforts also to prove the universal ethical norms to be objectively valid ended in failure, and both Bertrand Russell and William Moore had come to the conclusion that humanitarian goals and universal moral norms were only subjective wishes of human beings. Thus the natural desire of Man to seek some solid or objective basis for the validity of humanitarian goals or the equal fundamental rights to be enjoyed by every human being (because he or she is a human being) was frustrated.

Philosophy of Existentialism tried to grapple with the existential problems of being and the free decisions of human beings rightly and provided a ray of hope, but ultimately, it could not succeed and could not provide solutions to the existential problems of life which may truly convince and satisfy the hearts of men about their validity or truthfulness.

Psychoanalysts like Freud, Adler, Jung, Franz Alezander, Karen Horney and specially Erich Fromm were gradually moving in the right direction and specially Erich Fromm in his well-known books *Escape from Freedom*, *Man for Himself*, *Sane Society* and *Psychoanalysis and Religion*, rightly emphasised the role of Religion in the life of Man and tried to define its true meaning.

The theory of solipsism had doubted the existence of the self of man as the logical culmination of Hume's denial of the self of man and the notion of cause and its relationship with effect. But psychoanalysis had developed the notions of the real self of Man (Ego) and the unconscious mind (not the brain) without which the inner psychic conflicts of Man cannot be explained. Even Sigmund Freud had

realised that where physiology ends, the study of psychology begins, as Prof. Haldane had asserted that where Physics and Chemistry end, the study of Biology commences. Thus Haldane had shown that life cannot be fully explained by Physics and Chemistry and Life has got its own autonomy and its own laws too and in the same way, Freud, Jung, Adler, Horney and specially Erich Fromm had shown that human mind cannot be well explained without taking into account the real self of man, his unconscious urges and his innate moral strivings in response to the existential problems and the existential situation with which Man is faced.

In the field of modern Physics, Eddington, James Jeans and the propounders of the theory of Quantum Mechanics and also Whitehead as scientific philosophers had showed that there was indeterminacy at the root of matter and there was mind working at the base of matter.

Freedom always goes with individuality, moral responsibility and with some sort of (undeveloped or under-developed or potential) personality which is termed as Ego in psychic terms.

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal in his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* had tried to show that this universe consists of egos and sub-egos and the universe exists in one God Who is the greatest Ego or the greatest Personality. Egos of human beings are sub-egoes in the Greatest Ego of God. Just as cells in the human body have got some ego and consequently some freedom, but they, are limited by the freedom of the body as a unity, in the same fashion, God has, on His Own free will, given some freedom to human beings and has limited to that extent, His Own Freedom according to Iqbal. The Qur'an says that 'God is always in a new glory', which means that the Creative Process of the expression of the precious treasures of the personality of God in the form of sub-egos of various degrees is continuously going on. It indicates the expanding and growing universe.

Iqbal also points out that time and space are relative concepts and in the Qur'an and Hadith, Time has been

given great importance from the point of view of understanding the glory of God.

Time is not an aspect of space as Einstein believed, but time has really got its own distinct dimension. Muslim sufistic philosophers have emphasised the great importance of Time in the creative activities of Man in the light of the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith.

So, God is transcendental and also immanent. Things cannot exist without the immanence of God, but the Personality of God is Transcendental. So everything individually is not God, though everything and every being is a part of God in a higher or a lower degree. Just as every cell in the human body is not the human being, but it is the part of human being and the actual personality of the human being transcends the different cells and parts of the human body, in the same way, though God dwells in every atom and being of the Universe, still His Personality transcends the Universe and so the psychic and the spiritual rapport can be had by Man only transcendentally with this transcendent Ego of God. This is the approach of the Qur'an.

So the notion of some Muslim and other Semitic philosophers that God has created the Universe out of nothing is actually wrong. People who say this, have not understood the meaning of nothing. Because nothing comes out of nothing and once it is accepted that God created something out of nothing, it creates a great philosophical enigma to create a link between God and this something emanating from nothing and Religion is posited in juxtaposition and contradiction to Science. Real religion never comes in conflict with science or philosophy, but on the contrary; it supports them, because they also are methods for searching truth; and science, philosophy and religion are complementary to one another in their co-operative search for Truth (i.e. God). That is the basic approach of the Qur'an. It also helps in bringing Islam and other religions like Buddhism and Jainism and Hinduism not Brahminism and Christianity and Judaism nearer to one another. So when Russell recommends Man to be one with Nature, with other human beings and with one's

own self and when Man succeeds in being so, he or she, actually becomes one with transcendental God working behind and within Nature, in other human beings and within one's own self. This is what the Qur'an describes as meeting with God. God cannot be seen with naked eyes, because He is transcendental and so He can be felt only spiritually and that is seeing God or meeting God. So the secret of Happiness as shown by Bertrand Russell is the same as shown by the Qur'an and pointed out vividly by Sufis and described in spiritual terms as meeting with God.

Meaning of the Perfection of Religion

In the Qur'an, it is said: 'I (God) have perfected religion for you and completed my favours' (on you).

Here, it is a pointer to the fact that Religion has become now conscious with the messengership of Prophet Muhammad, and before him, Religion was unconscious. There was unconscious spiritual experience uptil then, but with the emergence of Prophet Muhammad, there was conscious acceptance of what was unconsciously perceived and experienced. That is why in everything that Islam prescribes, there is the *niyyat* (conscious determination). There is *niyyat* for prayers, for fasting, for alms-giving, for Hajj etc. When the Islamic logos 'There is no god, but one God' is followed, first you deny all false ideas of deities so that you pass through the stage of having the experience of thoughtlessness. Here a person begins to experience God and becomes spiritually one with God in a transcendental fashion — and from this experience, he consciously utters that there is one God. Experience imparts certainty about God. Buddhism stopped at the Islamic logos that 'there is no god' in order to enable Man to enter into the state of thoughtlessness and *Nirvana* where person will have the transcendental experience of God. Gautam Buddha avoided discussing God, as in his times, the ideas of God had taken the place of God and different ideas of God involved differences of opinion and conflicts and quarrels and exploitation. Thus Buddhism was unconscious Islam and Islam is conscious Buddhism. Of course, the Qur'an

describes every natural religion devoid of impurities, as Islam.

Here it should be noted that the Qur'an did not say that God has perfected *Shari'a* but has said that God has perfected Religion (*Din*) which is universal, but with Prophet Muhammad, it takes the shape of conscious acceptance at the level of intellect, at the level of responsible awareness and Religion is perfected in this sense. Intellectual awareness and conscious acceptance of the data of spiritual experience as the source of knowledge regarding God, Soul and life after death, is philosophy. So, the *Din* of Islam is Religion as well as Philosophy.

Individual Freedom and Belief in Religion

In Islam, there is the *Din* and there is *Shari'at*. *Din* is there within the heart of every human being and the prophet is an additional mercy from God, as he reminds us of our true religion. *Shari'a* is a means to express this *Din* and *Shari'a* will change through *Ijtihad* with the change of time or space or of both. So in both the cases of *Din* and *Shari'a*, Man does not lose his freedom. *Din* is within him and he has to discover it or be aware of it from within. So there is no imposition from without. So it is our free choice. *Shari'a* will change and so every human being has got the intellectual freedom to apply the universal principles of *Din* for the evolution of *Shari'a*. Of course, past *Shari'as* have got historical value and we have to learn many lessons from them. But there is no monopoly of *ulemas* here and all human beings are equal here in exercising their birth-right of *Ijtehad*. To show the right path is the prerogative of God only and so no monopolist can force or impose his views on others, he can only try to peacefully persuade. Thus in both the cases of *Din* and *Shari'as*, human freedom is preserved in Islam.

Not only that, but human freedom of thought is encouraged in Islam. In the Qur'an, almost on every page, people are asked to think, ponder and reflect on Nature, Man and History. There is a saying of Prophet Muhammad that 'Difference of Opinion is the blessing of God'.

Nationalism and Internationalism in Islam

Islam is not opposed to healthy nationalism. There are two types of nationalism — healthy and unhealthy. When people belonging to different religions, sects, races and colours are staying together on the same land, in the same country, and if they live like brethren and co-operate with one another and help one another without any discrimination, that is healthy nationalism.

But if land is given more importance than the human beings living on it and if a dictum is believed that my country is always right and thus nationalism is made a blind cult or on idol which has to be worshipped, then it is unhealthy nationalism, to which Islam is opposed.

But Islam is not opposed to healthy nationalism, on the contrary, it supports it strongly. There is a saying of prophet Muhammad) that 'Love of the country is the part of Faith'. For a Muslim, Faith is more important than his life and property and the love of the country is declared to be the part of faith. This shows the great support that Islam gives to healthy nationalism though it is opposed to blind and unhealthy nationalism which goes against universal brotherhood covering whole mankind.

Nowadays, the word 'Jehad' has become very controversial. So, here we try to clarify the real meaning of the word 'Jehad'.

The True Meaning of Jihad

Etymologically speaking, the term 'Jihad' means 'the exerting of one's utmost ability and power and endeavour in contending with an object of disapprobation — which is of three kinds (1) one's self (2) devil and (3) a visible enemy', as used in the Chapter 22 verse 77 of the Qur'an (Lane's *Arabic English Lexicon).* In short, it is used in the general sense of using one's ability and power and striving hard to refrain from doing bad deeds, thus fighting Devil and one's self and doing useful deeds to other human beings for seeking God's pleasure (i.e. accepting them as absolute moral values for action in life) and fighting only in self-defence when war or fight is imposed on them, but

remaining always ready for compromise for the sake of peace, as the word 'Islam' itself means having peace with God and peace with other human beings. In the Qur'an the word *'Qital'* has been used for physical fight and killing and not the word 'Jehad' for it.

In Hadith, doing good deeds, avoiding bad deeds and seeking knowledge is called *Jihad-e Kabeer* i.e. big Jehad and fighting in self-defence when war or fight is imposed, is called *Jihad-e Sagheer* i.e. small Jehad. Jehad-e-Kabir is expected to continue throughout life and that is why it is called Big Jihad while *Jihad-e Sagheer* is expected to be exceptional and rare and, hence, it is called Small Jihad. During the life time of Prophet Muhammad, though a number of wars were imposed on Muslims to wipe out the very existence of this budding Muslim community, the personal participation of Prophet Muhammad in the war of self-defence was only for one and a half days in all.

The Hudaibiya Accord of 'No War' despite the one-sided and insulting conditions insisted upon by the opposite aggressive party of Mecca and accepted by Prophet Muhammad on behalf of Muslims is a great monument and lesson for Peace. His 'Jihad' and of his companions consisted in avoiding war rather than waging war and exerting their utmost for peace. In Madina, he tried to create a nation consisting of Muslims, Christians, Jews and other native non-Muslims by having a common charter or a constitution which upheld the basic human right of religious freedom of practice and propagation for members of all communities and all religions. Thereby it also tried to create a composite culture to which all communities might have contributed. So, to say that the Qur'an or Hadith enjoins use of force or war for the propagation of Islam is a great lie and it is completely unknown to the Qur'an and Hadith and even Arabic language revolts against the totally false meaning imputed to the word 'Jehad'. In the Qur'an, it is said 'There is no compulsion in Religion, (as) the right way is clearly distinct from error' (2:256).

During the 23-year period of revelation, 10 years were

passed by Prophet Muhammad in Mecca preaching Islam and 13 years in Madina doing the same. But in Mecca, there was terrible persecution of Muslims, but it was of individual nature. So when Prophet Muhammad and his companions migrated to Madina in search of peace, the Meccan non-believers found Muslims out of their reach and hence, they started organising themselves in the form of the army of thousands of people and going to Madina to wage war against the Muslims to wipe out their very existence. So wars were fought by Muslims in self-defence only after leaving Mecca, and still verses of the Holy Qur'an revealed at Mecca, talk of Jehad and so there, Jehad, as it is obvious, does not mean war or fighting with non-believers, but there the word Jehad "means fighting against Devil (Satan within one's self) and bearing persecution and hardship patiently for the sake of Allah. In Madina, when wars were imposed on Muslims by Meccan aggressive hordes and their associates, permission to fight in self-defence was given to Muslims as the following verses of the Qur'an make it clear.

'Permission to fight is given to those upon whom war is made because they are oppressed and Allah is well able to assist them, those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause except that they say, our Lord is Allah. And had there not been Allah's repelling some people by others, there would have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which Allah's name is much remembered, and Allah will help him who helps His cause". (22:34,40). So those people who came to Madina to attack Muslims, and who were responsible for driving away Muslims from their houses in Mecca, they were the visible enemies and hence 'Jehad' in the meaning of the fight in self-defence was permitted to Muslims by the Qur'an.

This Jehad-e Saghir is meant for enemies who are visible i.e. who are seen on the actual battle ground attacking Muslims or were seen i.e. were visible in driving Muslims away from their houses in Mecca and consequently Muslims seeking refuge in Madina. But as it had been already pointed out that even with these visible enemies,

efforts must be made for peace as it was done by Prophet Muhammad in Hudaibiya Accord of Peace made with these visible enemies. In the Qur'an, it is exhorted: "And if they incline to peace, do thou incline to it and trust in Allah. He is the Hearing, the Knowing. And if they intend to deceive thee, then surely Allah is sufficient for thee" (8:61, 62). Also it is said in the Qur'an "And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight with you and be not aggressive, surely Allah does not love the aggressors." (2:190)

About the invisible enemies, who are the victims of the false propaganda against Islam and Muslims and begin to believe in their ideology of hatred, no question of fighting with them arises. They are innocent victims and so Truth must be brought before them. The Qur'an also points out that "to kill one innocent person is like killing entire mankind, and saving one innocent person is like saving entire mankind". (5:32). So Muslims are not allowed to kill any innocent non-Muslim or Muslim and it is totally against the injunctions of the Qur'an and Hadith to do so.

Besides self defence when actually attacked, there are other constitutional, legal and peaceful ways of opposing aggression, in the modern times, in modern democracies, like going to the Court, reporting to the newspapers and the TV channels persuading to the well-meaning and sympathetic non-Muslims, resorting to fasting by Muslims and sympathetic non-Muslims together, by resorting to *Satyagraha*, having political wakefulness and doing effective voting during election times for sincere political parties and sincere candidates. These are also the different ways and forms of 'Jehad'.

Muslims have no ill-feeling towards any community; they are opposed only to aggressive and communal elements who are active in wiping out Muslims. Even with them, Muslims are ready to have a dialogue. Muslims extend a hand of fellowship and friendship towards all communities for the active progress and prosperity of all the people of India and the world irrespective of their caste, creed or religion.

References

1. Al-Qur'an (2:111-12)
2. *Ibid.*, (2:62)
3. Al-Qur'an (49:13)
4. *Ibid.*, (50:16)
5. Bukhari, *Kitab al-Iman* (2:19)
6. Bukhari *(Sunan of Abu Dawud)* (15:33)
7. Abu al-Hasan Ismail ibn Ali al-Ash'ari *Maqalat al-Islamiyyin*
8. Al-Qur'an (49:14)
9. Maulana Muhammad Ali, *Religion of Islam, op. cit.* pp. 120-122.
10. *Al-Sahih al-Muslim*
11. *Al-Sahih al-Bukhari*
12. Reported by Abu Hurairah
13. *Ibid.*
14. Reported by Hazrat Anas
15. Reported by Ibn Abbas
16. Al-Qur'an (2:62)
17. *Ibid.*, (3:1113, 114-15)
18. *Ibid.*, (35:24)
19. *Ibid.*, (2:111-12)
20. *Ibid.*, (99:7, 8)
21. Iqbal Muhammad, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam op. cit.*, p. 123.

10

Muammar al-Qadhdhafi's Interpretation of Islam

Muammar al-Qadhdhafi's interpretation of Islam, as a theory, is a very true interpretation of Islam and most relevant in the modern scientific world. The basis of his political, economic and social theories as adumbrated in the form of his Third Universal Theory and contained in his Green Book, is the Qur'an. In the Green Book, he does not quote verses of the Qur'an or Hadith in support of his theories or their link with the Qur'an or Hadith which is a correct approach, because, it is not only meant for the people of Libya or only for Muslims in the world, but for entire mankind as an alternative to communism and *laissez faire* capitalism. His approach again highlights the fact that the Qur'an's approach is democratic, socialistic (i.e. humanistic), non-authoritarian and rational which can be spelled and presented in non-religious terms also.

Like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad of India and Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, Qadhdhafi makes a distinction between *Deen* (Religion) and *Sharia*. *Deen* embodies genuine faith in God and values of freedom, justice, brotherhood and euqality of all human beings irrespective of their religion, nation, caste, community, race or sex. These universal values do not change, they are eternal but dynamic and

hence they are manifested in ever new forms, new glory. *Sharia* consists of ways of worship of God and social (including economic and political) laws and structures. Ways of worship of different religious communities and sects may be different from one another and they may not change, but social laws and structures must change when changed circumstances of time and space may require them to be so. If in the prevailing material context, it does not change, then *Deen* or real Religion dies out and *Sharia* becomes lifeless and actually becomes a hindrance to the manifestation of true religion and misses its historical role of changing the society for the betterment of oppressed masses. In support of this vital distinction, we have previously quoted many verses from the Qur'an and excerpts also from Hadith. Muammar al-Qadhdhafi also makes this distinction and points out.

'Islam is the religion of your father Abraham, it is he who called you Muslims aforetime (22:78). Islam is therefore ancient, going back to the time of Abraham and even to the beginning of creation. The seal of the prophet (Muhammad) came only to conclude all Divine messages with Islam' *(Al-sijill al-Qaumi)*. So Islam as religion *(millah)* is eternal and primordial. Prof. Mahmoud Ayoub who has written an excellent book on the *Religious Thought of Muammar al-Qadhdhafi* has described Qadhdhafi's view of this eternal Islam as Islam (*Deen*) without *Sharia* (page no. 68) i.e. Islam being basically *Deen* embodying its moral or humanistic eternal values while *Sharia* implying the different ways, laws and structures for applying the *Deen* in changing circumstances. Thus *Sharia* may change with the change of time and space but the *Deen* may be common for persons belonging to different communities so that they may co-operate with one another for realising these values in our actual lives. Qadhdhafi points out that 'After Mohammad, there are no longer Muslims and non-Muslims. Rather all those who believe in God and do good deeds (and avoid doing bad deeds) regardless of what specific religion they adhere to, are Muslims in the broadest possible meaning of this word. If we were to believe in one God and do good deeds, the problem would be finished. It would

then not matter to me whether you follow Mohammad, Jesus or Moses.

'There is no justification, in Qadhdhafi's view, to stirrup conflict among Muslims and Christians and to claim by this to be defending either Islam or Christianity.' (*Ibid* 68-69)

Muammar al-Qadhdhafi's Libration Theology

Muammar al-Qadhdhafi's theology of Islam is Liberation Theology. It liberates Man from the slavery of inanimate and animate objects and other human beings or even from one's own baser self by preaching the living faith in one God, Who is the Creator, the Nourisher, the Sustainer, the Imparter of Justice, and the Compassionate and the Merciful. Submission to God is not slavery but becoming one with God by complete surrender to Him by being overawed by his wonderful and marvelous creation and making the above-mentioned Attributes *(Sifat)* of God as the purpose and principles of action for one's life and for creating social, political and economic structures on them. Belief *(Iman)* is not mere utterance of certain words, but commitment to certain moral and humanitarian principles for action, because God's self is the Light *(Noor)* of the heavens and the earth and it is expressed and manifested through his Attributes. Also God is self-sufficient and so when we praise, His Attributes and His self or worship Him, we do it for bringing moral and spiritual change in us and to enhance our capacity to do good deeds and exert ourselves whole-heartedly for removing poverty, unemployment, oppression and exploitation from society which the Qur'an demands as our true test of faith in God. Qadhdhafi's main moral value is freedom under the suzerainty of one God and he believes that masses should be freed from all types of slavery, and they should enjoy political, economic and social freedom, there should be equality and human brotherhood. In the Third Universal Theory — as contained in the Green Book, he has shown the ways and depicted structures for evolving real political, economic and social freedom for all men and women. He accepts the fact that

parliamentary democracy and presidential democracy and pluralists societies of the U.S.A., U.K., Germany, France and other European and some Asian and African countries have widened the area of freedom for the masses, but still genuine, full-fledged freedom and democracy is found to be lacking there. Qadhdhafi believes that 'representative democracy is false democracy. A representative system of government is a dictatorial rule either of minority over the majority or vice versa. If, for example, 51 percent of the population votes for some one and 49 percent against him, then 49 percent of the people would be denied their right to be represented by someone acceptable to them'. (p. 36). He believes that in the election, there are exaggerated statements and tall claims, and elections are so expensive that only rich people can stand as candidates in election. In the Green Book, it is pointed out that 'there ought to be no representation by others on behalf of the people: representation is a deception. A representative assembly is popular rule in absentia'. (p. 36). 'Democracy should be the direct authority of the people, not a representative authority. A representative national assembly or parliament is established either through electoral districts, a political party or coalition of parties or by appointment. In all cases, it is a false democracy because members of such an assembly represent only their party of coalition and not the people.' (p. 36). According to Qadhdhafi, 'political parties are the latest form of dictatorial rule, because they represent the rule of a part over the whole of society and so party politics is an Abortion of Democracy.' (p. 36)

In March 1977, Libya was named 'The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya'. The meaning of the word 'Jamahiriya', is 'populist' 'society of the masses' as very clearly elucidated by Prof. Ayoub.

Qadhdhafi a Radical Humanist Thinker

Muammar al-Qadhdhafi is a radical humanist thinker. He is a great humanist, but his humanism does not restrict itself to charity but it extends to political, economic, social and religious fields and structures of the society also. He

cannot be satisfied with formal change or change in the form of dictatorship or having only political democracy and allowing economic monopolies to rule over the people and exploit them. This will imply divided loyalty i.e. *Shirk* or cheating which implies *Nifaq* and thus it will be denial of whole-hearted worship *(Ebadat)* of God. God i.e. His Attributes should be reflected in every action of Man and in his all social structures. In order to spread these ideas academically in the world, the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiraya led by Muammar al-Qadhdhafi has established the 'World Islamic Call Society'.

Mr. M.N. Roy was also a great radical humanist thinker and he also believed in direct democracy and was an atheist and an old communist from India working with eminent world communist leaders like Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky of the U.S.S.R. and Maotse Tung of China. But later, he differed with the communists and wrote books like *Beyond Communism, New Humanism, Reason, Romanticism and Revolution* etc. and disbanded his political party, as he then believed in party less democracy and advocated the pyramid like structure of peoples' committees, as Muammar al-Qadhdhafi has also done. Mr. M.N. Roy also wrote a book, entitled *Historical Role of Islam* giving a great tribute to Islam for its progressive role in History. (Its translation into Gujarati language has been done by me and it is in press).

Professor Mahmoud Ayoub has described the political structure of direct democracy as conceived in Green Book and being followed in Libya, in the following words.

The Political Structure of Direct Democracy

'Each municipality in the country has a number of people's congresses consonant with its population. In the country as a whole, there are ninety-seven local or basic congresses. In every municipality, a basic committee is nominated to oversee, the execution of the decisions and recommendations of the congresses under its supervision. A similar, but much enlarged, committee is nominated, one whose supervision extends over the country. This committee is further entrusted with foreign affairs. The executive

powers of this committee cannot go beyond the decisions of the local congresses of the country as a whole on both domestic and foreign matters.

'The people's congresses are essentially legislative bodies. They promulgate laws and make recommendations which are passed on to the committee for execution. The committees are themselves supervised by the local congresses which appoint them. Every committee appoints a general secretary and two assistant secretaries. All the secretaries are in turn members of a general national congress. A member of every organisation of workers or professional unions, syndicates, student unions and the like — also represents his or her organisation in the general national congress. Finally, people's committees are nominated to replace administrative government offices, departments and ministries. These committees, however, act on the decisions of the general national congress as well as those of the local congresses and have no political authority of their own.' (p. 38-39)

Economic Freedom

Now let us take into account Qadhdhafi's views on economic freedom. Political freedom remains on paper only if there is no economic freedom. Economic freedom of a person is lost when his or her basic needs are in the control of another person or persons.

Marxism-Leninism in the sense of one party — rule subsists on force and violence to be imposed on the people. Capitalist system works on the basis of self interest. Both lack moral dimension and social welfare vision. Only competition does not guarantee the success of the capitalist system. Actually along with the moral aspect, it requires many other political and social conditions also to be fulfilled. Qadhdhafi appreciates the benefits accruting to the workers and the people at large on account of the social security system, fixation of minimum wages, regulation of working hours, the right to go on strike, limiting private ownership or demolishing it, specially in public goods. But still in the wage or the salary system, the relationship is that

of a master and a servant and thus it smacks of a sort of temporary slavery. So, according to him, all these benefits can be deemed as charity measures rather than the acceptance of the rights of the workers. So Qadhdhafi criticises both the systems as based on wage slavery and exploitation and develops an alternative third universal theory wherein wage slavery is not there and workers are partners in industry leaving no chance for being exploited. He wrote in the Green Book: "The freedom of any human being is deficient to the extent that another controls his needs. Needs can lead to the enslavement of human being by another. Furthermore, the primary cause of exploitation is needs. Thus social struggle always arises when one group in society gains control over the needs of others."

First essential need is the house. The principle in the Green Book is 'A house belongs to its occupants.' So the ownership of the house should belong to the person or persons who stay in it. Rented house is an anomaly in such a society based on economic freedom.

Another most important need is one's livelihood which should not be dependent on wage system or on charity. In a socialist system that he conceives on Islamic principles, workers and technicians are to be not pure wage or salary earners, but partners in the business. He pointed out to the people that: "The means of your livelihood are your own private property which you yourself must manage within the bound of satisfying your personal needs or it must be your share of a product, in the production of which you were an essential participant and not a wage earner for labour rendered to any one". *(Green Book)*

Another essential need of a person is the means of transport. Everybody should own his own vehicle so that he does not remain dependent on anybody else.

Then he comes to the discussion of the problem of the ownership of land. A farmer has the right to cultivate land, but no one owns land. The right to work on land is inherited by his heirs, but not the ownership. So there is no exploitation of the farmers, because there is no owner of land, except society or the state.

When the basic needs of the persons are freed from the control of the state or other persons, then alone they can enjoy real physical, intellectual and spiritual freedom, and also may be enabled to contribute something precious to the welfare of the society. In the society conceived by Qadhdhafi, a worker, including a technician, either works for himself or he works in a co-operative society in which he gets an equal share in the gross profit.

He also clarifies in the 'Green Book' that the physically disabled, and mentally retarded people and elderly people will also get the same share as the healthy people in the wealth and income of the society.

In the 'Green Book', public wealth has been compared with a storehouse. He writes: 'The share of every individual in the public wealth of society varies only in accordance with the kind of public service he performs, or the excellence of the work he does.' *(Green Book).*

This may imply some difference in the levels of incomes of the people. But this difference is functional and not based on exploitation of other persons.

Also the private property wherein the worker is the owner of it or participates as a partner in the cooperative enterprise and gets a share according to his contribution, that type of private property is a sacred right of every member of the society. Thus the principle of work and reward prevailing in Libya is from each according to his ability and to each according to his efforts or contribution.

Deen and *Sharia*

Islam is a universal religion and therefore laws and social structures through which it is expressed, should change with the change in time and space, otherwise it loses its claim of universality. So Muammar al-Qadhdhafi had to face the problem of *Deen* versus *Sharia*, relationship between Qur'an and Hadith and the role and nature of *Fiqh* and Nationalism versus pan-Islamism and the place of minority in a Muslim majority country and further still, all these enigmas and problems were to be viewed and solved from the point of view of Islam i.e. Qur'an and

Hadith. He rightly believes that Islam is such a rational, humanitarian and universal religion which can solve these problems satisfactorily and can function as a powerful means to liberate mankind from the clutches of oppression, exploitation, slavery, superstitions, poverty, unemployment, hatred, violence and lack of peace.

Sometimes Qadhdhafi uses the word *Sharia* in a wider sense so as even to include *Deen* in it. But from all his writings and speeches, it becomes clear that according to him, *Deen* and *Sharia* are different from each other despite their close inter-relationship and *Deen* is a wider term and consists of moral and humanitarian values which themselves do not change, but the external forms through which they are expressed (which we call *Sharia*) continue to change as required by the changing circumstances. This keeps alive the flame of humane values burning and spreading light and welfare all around. Qadhdhafi himself points out that these eternal moral values are linked with the basic nature of Man, and according to the Qur'an, every man is born on the nature *(Fitrat)* of God which is basic nature of Man. Any bad deed committed by Man implies a revolt against this basic nature of the self which leads to a split personality thus lessening his capacity to get happiness and peace and his hell starts in this very world, it being an ominous sign of a greater hell stored for him in the Hereafter. Thus *Deen* is there in every human being and so *Deen* is not imposed from outside, because there is no compulsion in religion, but the Prophet draws our attention to our basic nature *(Fitrat)* and appeals to follow it and the role of every prophet had been on this line, as he is also, as declared by the Qur'an, a human being and there is no divine element in him. Divinity is there only in God and no body, not even a prophet can be a partner with God, as it would be *Shirk*.

So Qadhdhafi points out that 'the Qur'an does not lay down a law for things; rather it provides the bases for such laws. By setting forth basic principles, the Qur'an allows people to promulgate laws based on them.' (p. 96)

These basic principles are *Deen* and the laws are *Sharia* which are based on those basic principles. *Sharia* in the

days of Prophet Muhammad bore the print of circumstances and traditions prevailing in those days in Hejaz.

Prophet Muhammad changed certain traditions prevailing in his times or changed their direction or laid the foundation for its complete abolition in future. So keeping in view the general principles of *Deen*, our intellect has to be applied to change the *Sharia*. So the Qur'an throws the responsibility and guidance on Man's own shoulders. Ahadith are the sayings of Prophet Muhammad and Sunnah represent the deeds of Prophet Muhammad and the Qur'an is the revelation from God to Prophet Muhammad through the agency of the angel *Gabriel*. God does not talk directly, but indirectly, here through the angel.

Place of Hadith in Islam

In a debate between Qadhdhafi and the Muslim Ulema (religious scholars) held in July 1978, Qadhdhafi had pointed out.

'Were we to know for certain that this or that Hadith had been uttered by the Messenger, we would accept it willingly as we would the Qur'an. But the great dilemma is: Where is that which the Messenger actually uttered, and where is that which he did not utter? This is specifically serious because, after the Messenger, many sects and schools *(madhahib)* appeared in Islam. These schools which you now follow were not present at the time of the Messenger. These schools and sects were political movements which appeared (and later crystallised) in the Muslim Community. These sectarian movements brought the Muslims into such great conflicts that the blood of many people was shed; and even the companions fought among themselves. During this period, many Hadith were fabricated and falsely attributed to the Messenger in order that every group or party could use these Hadith to prove that their stance was true and Islamic one. If we were now to study the corpus of Hadith Literature, we would find sixty kinds of Hadith.' (p. 79)

'Sahih collections of Hadith by Muslim and Bukhari are considered to be very authentic and reliable but Qadhdhafi explained that they even are not above or free

from infringement.' He cast doubt on the authenticity of all that is in the Sahih collections of Muslim and Bukhari, these being the two most respected canonical Hadith collections. These are books, he argued, which have been subject to interpolations and alterations and thus could not be trusted to preserve the sayings of the Prophet in all their details'. (p. 79) He argued: ' We cannot distinguish the sound from the fabricated Hadith. The sayings of the Prophet were collected in the second century; hence no one of those who collected Hadith had been a contemporary of the Prophet. Hadith cannot, therefore, serve as the law of society.' (p. 81)

So, in the light of these facts, according to Qadhdhafi, the best course is that: 'Every one of us should be free to implement or reject any Hadith. Everyone should use his reason in judging among different Hadith. Those which he finds to be good, he must accept, and those which he deems to be weak and false, he should reject. This is the best way because then no one would need to abandon the Hadith altogether, and no one would impose Hadith on us". (p. 80)

According to Qadhdhafi, essence of the Qur'an is embodied in the *Deen* as inunciated in the Qur'an and the source of the Natural law of society is found to be there in the *Deen* of Qur'an and everything other than the Qur'an is the work of men and so it cannot be accepted as the primary source of the Natural law of society. All the schools of *Fiqh (Madhahib)* as developed by Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Shafa'i, Imam Malik, Imam Hambal embody, according to him, positive laws and they are exactly like Roman Law or Code Napoleon. These Muslim schools of law are considered to be *Sharia* by the Muslims at large, but he announced before the religious *Alims* (scholars): 'I consider the Islamic *Sharia* as a legal school of thought exactly like the Roman Law or any other law. It is the part of an Islamic heritage; it is not, however, religion.' (p. 81)

New Socialism

New socialism is a very important part of Qadhdhafi's

Third Universal Theory. But it is quite unlike Marxist socialism or socialism in other countries of Europe, Asia and Africa. Though new socialism adheres to private property and considers it sacred, but it is unlike capitalism, because in this alternative system, worker is not a wage earner or salary earner, but a partner in business and a sharer in gross profit. Therefore, the Arabic word used for socialism is *Ishtirakiyah* i.e. participating in work on the equal level and sharing. Though this term does not occur in the Qur'an or Hadith, it is based on Islamic principles of private property, co-operative work and production and social justice, and equality of all human beings. In the days of Prophet Muhammad and the first four caliphs, these principles were actually followed in practice in society.

There is a well-known saying of Prophet Muhammad that 'Give the worker his due before his sweat dries up.' He also said: 'Anyone who goes to sleep sated while neighbour is hungry, is not one of us.' Prof. Ayoub describes Qadhdafi's theory of socialism as depicted in Green Book, *Al-Sijill al-Qawmi* and *Khutab wa-Ahadith al-Qaid al-Diniyah*, in the following words: 'Socialism for him is the basis of social and political freedom. What gives this distinctive socialism its Islamic character is its respect for the right of private ownership. It differs completely from the capitalist system in which one class of society dominates all other classes, which it then seeks to crush and humiliate. It is also completely different form the communist system in which a capitalist government dominates all other classes in the name of workers, and thus establishes a society of state capitalism. True socialism, in contrast, promotes equal opportunity, social justice and the sacred alliance of all the active elements of society. Islam is the religion of justice, the religion of true socialism. Qadhdhafe argues: the Qur'an advocated socialism long before Marx and Lenin. He also said that 'If communism means exclusive state ownership, then we reject such exclusive types of policies. If, moreover, communism means atheism, then we reject this atheism, because we believe in God.' (p. 94-95)

In Islam hoarding of goods with the purpose of getting non-functional profits or interest on loans meant for meeting

the prime necessities of life which is called usury and excessive profits with monopolistic effort (not by reducing costs and reducing prices of the products or improvement in quality) are prohibited. Money acquired without contributing to output is *Riba* i.e. usury. Where there is recompense i.e. contribution to output, it may be interest but not *Riba* and excessive profits also may constitute *Riba*, because there is no parallel or corresponding recompense or contribution to output in excessive profit, as it is acquired through non-functional monopolistic practices. The basic spirit and demand of the Qur'an, Hadith and Sunnah is human equality, social justice and human brotherhood. Help to a fallen man, a helpless person is required, not his exploitation. The Qur'an says: 'All human beings are the progeny of one man and one woman and they were made into different tribes and nations in order that they many know one another; surely the most noble from you in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous'.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphatically declared: 'God has abolished through Islam — the haughtiness of the Age of Ignorance *(Jahiliyah)* and the boasting of their lineage. This because all human beings are from Adam and Adam was made of clay. The noblest of them in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous'.

It is interesting to note and very correct also that socialism as a tendency in Man existed even before the revelation of the Qur'an, as Truth existed as absolute value before it. These absolute moral values of social welfare, freedom, equality, brotherhood emanate from the basic nature of Man, created by God and hence the Qur'an emphasises these values on which social structures and laws there — of may be then erected. It is also worth noting that his concept of private property as conceived in Islam is basically of human stewardship over God's wealth. It has got some likeness with the trusteeship principle as advocated by Gandhiji of India. Gandhiji's mother followed the *pranali sampradaya* on which there was the deep effect of Islamic Sufism. So, Gandhiji was to some extent influenced by the spirit of liberal Islam.

The Qur'an enjoins: "Give in alms of that which God has charged you with as his representatives" (57:7). In the Qur'an, it is said: "When we wish to destroy a town, we give free rein to the rich among its inhabitants, and they lead dissolute lives in it. Thus just judgement would be passed over them, and we destroy it utterly." (17:16)

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in those days fixed the rates of *zakat*. But the Qur'an has also enjoined to give in charity all which is in excess of one's necessities. So *sadqah* also is very important which implies further voluntary charity. Even the rates of *zakat* may be increased to a reasonable proportion without possible adverse effect on production and poor and needy people can be helped with it if the circumstances so demand it.

It should be further clarified that the natural resources are not to be included in private property in the Third Universal Theory system as they belong to the Society as a whole. One of the last points now: What is the main cause of backwardness of the Muslim community? Muammar al-Qadhdhafi, says that God chose the Muslim community to spread His last message to mankind. In the Qur'an it is stated: 'You are the best community brought forth for mankind, you enjoin the good, dissuade from evil and have faith in God'. (3:110)

But the present day Muslims have not taken the trouble of understanding real Islam as epitomised in the Qur'an and so God has become angry with them. So, as a result, Muslims in the world have lagged behind and backwardness has encircled them from within and from without and the result is poverty, hunger, disease, reactionary attitude, dogmatism, narrow-mindedness, dictatorship and oppression over them. (*Khutab wa-Ahadith al Qaid al-Diniya* p. 270)

Role of an Ethnical or a Religious Factor in the Formation of a Nation

Muammar al-Qadhdhafi has dealt with the problem of the relationship between Nationalism, Islamic identity and the status of a religious minority, in an excellent scholarly way in his Green Book. He observed: 'The mover of human

history is the social or ethical factor. There is no real rival to the social factor in influencing the unity of any one given social group except the religious factor, which can divide a single ethnic society, and which is capable of uniting diverse social groups with disparate ethnic identities. In the end, however the social factor prevails.' (*Green Book* Part 3)

This statement is very significant in the light of the fact that in many countries of Europe and in Soviet Russia and in the Indian sub-continent, the problem of the relationship between the ethnic or national identity and religious identity and also the theory of pan-Islamism and *khilafat* gave rise to many controversies. The theory of the secular state is also associated with it. It is a very delicate problem, but the light thrown by Gadhdhafi may help solve this knotty problem.

The theory of a secular state i.e. state having no religion and thus remaining neutral between religions has become acceptable not only in Europe and America, but in many countries of Asia and Africa also. In a non-Muslim majority country, the minority community also wants a neutral state regarding religion i.e. they want a secular state. In the present day world, it is only in Muslim majority countries that many Muslims demand that the state should have Islam as the state religion and they insist that Islamic *Sharia* should be followed by the state and accordingly the state should promulgate the relevant *sharia* laws. In Pakistan, Egypt, Iran, Indonesia, Algeria, there is a demand for it.

In the past, in many countries of Europe, there were conflicts and wars between Catholics and Protestants and between the church and the state. After much blood-shed and mutual warfare, they separated the church from the state and developed the theory that religion is a private matter between Man and God and it should not be brought in the social, economic and political matters. So, a dictum was developed 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caeser's and to God the things that are God's'.

Creation of the state of Israel on the basis of religion by the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. through UNO, in the midst

of Arab States, and it being carved out from Arab majority territory in 1948 and driving out Arab original inhabitants by force, gave rise to strong reaction on the part of the Arabs and a strong sense of Arab nationalism developed among the people belonging to different Arab countries under the leadership of president Nasser of Egypt. In his heydays, the slogan was 'Religion belongs to God and the fatherland belongs to all'. After his sad demise, Anwar Sadat became Egypt's president, and this theory of Nasser was carried further by him and he announced: 'No politics in religion and no religion in politics'.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the creator of Pakistan, trying to impart self-confidence to those Muslims of India who are now the citizens of Pakistan, made popular the theory 'Muslims are not a minority but a nation' which was wrongly considered to be the two-nation theory — a nation of Hindus and a nation of Muslims. In his first speech in the central Assembly of Pakistan, he emphatically announced that Muslims, Christians, Hindus, Parsis — members of all communities would be equal citizens of Pakistan and they all would enjoy equal citizen and political rights. When he was asked about making Islamic *Shariat* as state religion, he refused to do so and declared that the state will not have any particular religion as the state religion, but the values of freedom, democracy and equality as preached by Islam would be the watchword of the state of Pakistan. Jinnah was consistent in his approach and he was not contradicting himself, because he did not demand Pakistan on religious ground, but on economic, political and social grounds, as the economic and educational condition of Muslims was very poor and backward. By Muslims being a nation, he meant that along with Christians, Hindus, Parsis etc. Muslims can become together a nation and not remain only a minority.

This was the result of a strong Brahminism (high caste of Hindus dominating the economy, politics and education in India, as Jews do in the U.S.A. and other European countries) to which the leader of backward classes Dr. B.R. Ambedkar also had revolted in his own way, as Jinnah

had also done in his specific way. So in the Indian subcontinent, the struggle was not religious, but economic, political and social against deprivation of the rights of backward classes including Muslims, though the external form of the struggle might have looked to be religious.

In India, Maulana Ahmed Husein Madani and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad believed that *Qaum* (nation) can consist of many religious communities.

In the beginning of the 20th century, Rashid Rida who was the follower of Muhammad Abduh who again was the disciple of Jamal al-Deen Afghani emphasised for the Arab people, both the identities, national identity and Islamic identity. But afterwards, in the second half of the 20th century, national identity as Arabs was much emphasised and Islamic identity was neglected. Qadhdhafi believes that both the identities should not be separated, as far Arabs are concerned. It was Islam, on account of which the Arab nation could survive and they could develop their civilisation. At the same time, it is also a fact that the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic language and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to whom it was revealed, was also an Arab and he was thankful to God that he was born in an Arab family. Arabs were the first Muslims and it were the Arab Muslims who first spread Islam in the world.

Prophet Muhammad was proud that he was an Arab. In support of this argument, Qadhdhafi quotes a talk between Salman Farsi and Prophet Muhammad. Prophet Muhammad one day told Salman Farsi: 'Do not despise me lest you abandon your faith!' Salman said: 'How can I despise you when through you God guided us?'. The prophet clarified: 'If you despise the Arabs, you despise me'.

According to Qadhdhafi, for Arabs, religion is not a divisive force, but a uniting force. He points out that according to the conception of Islam as depicted in the Qur'an, whoever believes in God and believes that we — Muslims, Christians, Jews — the people of the Book, are the followers of the prophets, then, we all are Muslims to God. *(Al-Sijill al-Qaumi* Vol.4 pp. 321-323). Here the word

'Muslim' is used in a general sense as it etymologically also means the same.

Nadran Matran, who was a Syrian Christian, declared in 1913 that Islam is the fountain-head of the glory of Arabs which required to be preserved at all costs. Another Christian who was his contemporary said: 'Let everyone say I am an Arab and if being Arab is only possible through being Muslim, then let him say I am an Arab and a Muslim' (Ernest Dawn from 'Arabism to Ottomanism' pp. 142-3 as quoted in Mahmoud Ayoub's book *Islam and the Third Universal Theory*)

Qadhdhafi shows the basis of Arab nationalism in the Qur'an. He draws our attention to the Qur'anic message that any one who despises a black person or one who speaks a different language from his own, is in the wrong. He says: 'Islam has, from its beginning upheld the principles of universality and internationalism yet at the same time, Islam did not destroy the ethnic identities. This is because in destroying ethnic identities, one destroys the entire *ummah* (community of Islam). The world is made up of different communities; thus destroying a community is like destroying one of the world communities'. Then he quotes from the Qur'an: 'Give to the next of kin his due' and then explains: 'The Qur'an, therefore, commands us to prefer the nearest of kin in giving assistance. The nearest of kin with regard to us are the Arab peoples who must come before the Persian people, for example, inspite of the fact that both are Muslims. There is no question but that we must stand with the Arabs and assist them because they are of our own ethnic identity *(Qaumiyah)*. It is better for you that you assist your near relations whether this relationship be that of blood, the family, tribe or even a social relationship.

'You must preserve the integrity of the family, tribe, people and the nation" Blood kinship *(Silat al-rahim)* ties are sacred and the nation is one enlarged family. But it is necessary that this bias in favour or close relations be in quest of good, not evil ends'.

(*Al-Sijill al-Qaumi* vol.3, p. 189)

He also believes: 'It is not possible to separate the revival of Arab nationalism from the revival of the Arab Islamic identity'.

(*Al-Sijill al-Qaumi* Vol.10, p. 514)

We may say that the Arabic word 'Ummah' is used for indicating the religious community and the word 'Qaum' is used for a nation, so the Arabs are, broadly speaking, or atleast, expected to be *Ummah* as well as Qaum — both.

But for other communities and nations, it may be different i.e. nation (Qaum) and Ummah (community) may be distinct. So all the Muslims in the world constitute one *Ummah* though they may belong to different nations (Qaum). So Qadhdhafi believes that one cannot build a nation on religion only. Nation is there before religion comes or appears. In India the situation is very different due to the alround domination of high caste people in all the important fields of the society and so there is denial of the political, economic and social rights of backward classes including Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, along with the people of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes who in all constitute 85% of the people of India i.e. Bharat. Of course, there are other good aspects of Indian democracy and we are proud to be Indians.

It were the Brahmins who did not allow the different people of India to become one integrated nation and hence India lay prostrate against external invasions due to lack of unity. Pakistan is the direct result of Brahmin domination, discrimination and prejudice against the original inhabitants of India. Here criticism is against Brahminism not against all Brahmins. These special circumstances do not prevail in other countries where Muslims are in a minority. Muammar Qadhdhafi rightly believes like Jinnah, Ambedkar, Gandhiji, Abul Kalam Azad and Jawaharlal Nehru that the nation cannot be built-up on the basis of religion only and national identity takes precedence over the religious identity in the formation of nation states. He gives the examples from the Abbasid period and from the Ottoman *khilafat*. During the Abbasid period, Arabs and Persians were one identity, but ultimately Arabs and Persians separated as

different nations though they both were and are Muslims. In the same way, Muslim *khilafat* in Istanbul which consisted of Arabs and Turks, but dominated by Turks, ultimately disintegrated and not only Arabs revolted against it, but Kamal Ataturk (when he became the head of the Turkish state), he himself abolished *Khilafat*. Thus Arab national identity and Turkish identity separated from each other. This was not un-Islamic. Islam does not preach to create a nation on the basis of religion. So Qadhdhafi does not believe in the theory of pan-Islamism. It was a popular theory among Muslims in the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, because the colonialism of European countries ruled over many Muslim majority countries. But as these countries have become politically independent, after the end of the Second World War, the theory of pan-Islamism has lost most of the ground. So to people who critisise Qadhdhafi on this ground, Qadhdhafi's reply is 'many accused us (Arabs) of being seceders, advocates of cultural superiority (Shu'ubiyah), unbelievers, and against the caliph. Multitudes of martyrs fell in defence of such empty notions. We were not seceders, nor were we ethnocentric or unbelievers! Rather we were an Arab nation wishing to be independent from the Turkish nation. Thus in the end, it is always the nationalist factor which prevails'.

(*Al-Sijill al-Qaumi* pp. 894-95)

At the same time, Muammar al-Qadhdhafi emphasises that the national Muslim states should come together, co-operate with one another, but without losing their own ethnic identity or character.

In this regard, the last question is about the position of the religious or other types of minorities in a Muslim majority state. As for example, Jews who are the inhabitants of Libya, they are Arabs belonging to Libya so they would enjoy equal political, social and other rights as the Muslim Arabs of Libya enjoy, they will have full freedom of worship and practising their religion. Jews are not an ethnic minority, ethnically the Jews of Libya are Arabs while that is not the case with the Kurds and Armenians — they are the real ethnic minorities and Qadhdhafi believes that they

should be allowed to secede from their countries and form their own states.

(*Al-Sijill al-Qaumi* Vol.14 p. 893)

But Libyan Jews should return to Libya. Inviting them to Libya, he said: 'I wish to extend on this occasion a warm welcome to all Libyan Jews back to Libya and I would myself undertake to guarantee them absolute equality in the new and free society of the masses. They will be equal in all rights and obligations with all other Libyans. They will be able to practise their faith in their homes and places of their worship in full liberty'. *(Green Book)*

Regarding the position of the Jews, he said: 'Scientifically and analytically, Arab Jews do not constitute a minority in the Arab World. Oriental Jews (Shephardic Jews) are the children of Israel. They have the right to live in Palestine. As for those who migrated to Palestine just because they are Jews, they should return to their countries of origin. There is no justification for them to occupy Palestine'.

Muammar al-Qadhdhafi also announced:

'It is impossible to have a war between Muslims and Christians or between Muslims and Jews. This is because we all are the children of Abraham, our forefather. Furthermore, in our struggle against all kinds of idolatry, we and they are together, as we are all people of the Book' According to him, conflict with Israel is strictly a political conflict, as the bone of contention is the illegal occupation of land and deprivation of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. This conflict has no religious dimension. He said: 'All kinds of religious fanaticism are a crime. All that we wish is amity and brotherhood among all the descendents of Abraham'. *(Khutab wa Ahadith al-Qaid al-Deeniya* p. 100)

11

Sayyed Muhammad Khatami's Interpretation of Islam

During the post Second World War period, there was cold war between U.S.S.R and the U.S.A. But after the break-up of Soviet Russia and the fall of Marxist Socialism, cold war ended, and it is believed that after 1990, there is only one super power and that is the U.S.A. But there is another super power that is emerging and it is the Super Power of world public opinion based on Dialogue between civilisations and the pioneer of this Dialogue theory is the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran — Sayyed Muhammad Khatami.

Prof. Huntington of the U.S.A. developed the theory of clash of civilisations. Sometimes, the theory of a person echoes his psychology which here shows that Prof. Huntington wishes actually the clash between the civilisations to take place. That shows the sadistic tendency working in him and his other arguments are only rationalisations to justify his psychic impulse. No healthy man can talk of clash of civilisations in an atomic age. We hear the voice of sanity from the President of Iran, Muhammad Khatami. He advocates dialogue, understanding, reason, freedom of thought and participation of the people belonging to different civilisations in the process of the

dialogue to take place on the basis of equality and respect for the participants.

When Prof. Huntington talks about clash of civilisations, he means clash between Western Civilisation and Islam. But Khatami on the contrary advocates dialogue mainly between Western countries led by the U.S.A. and Muslim countries, though in general he recommends dialogue among all the civilisations as the solution of the problems arising among them. The year 2001 was approved by the world body, UNO, as the year of dialogue and understanding between civilisations, which was a significant development in the first year of the 21st century.

Khatami's Plea for Dialogue Between Civilisations

President Khatami highlights the following salient features of this debate.

(1) The 20th century was a century of 'war, turmoil, usurpation, discrimination and terror'. Two world wars were fought by the Western countries among themselves. Those wars were fought outside the world of Islam. Muslim countries were under the colonial rule of the Western Powers and they were actually the oppressed people. The basic rights of the people of Asia, Africa and Latin America were violated and denied and the Palestinian people were tortured and are being tortured in the extremely cruel way, and double standards have been adopted in this respect which implies denial of religion and morality. But after the termination of the Second World War, gradually the countries of Asia and Africa got political independence and all Muslim countries which were under colonial rule of European countries, they all have become politically independent, as, due to War, the colonical powers were exhausted and had lost the capacity to keep their rule over them. U.S.S.R., the U.S.A. and China also played their helping role and hence the process of independence of these countries was hastened. Due to the naked dance of violence, war and oppression, that took place during the 20th century, and due to the horrible development of the destructive power, due to science and the realisation that

violence breeds violence and does not solve the problems, world opinion is building up against oppression which breeds violence.

(2) It is a good sign that at the very dawn of the 21st century the present mankind now realises the 'pressing need for mutual dialogue and understanding'. It requires listening and speaking. But one cannot speak to the other party successfully explaining one's approach unless it hears first the other party attentively and exposes itself fully to the arguments and expression of feeling voiced by it with a view to sympathetically understand it and then it is entitled to speak.

(3) When the proposal of 'Dialogue among civilisations' is accepted, it means that the equality among nations is accepted. There are no master nations and no servant nations and so the self-interests of so-called master nations cannot be served at the cost of the interests of weaker nations even at the risk of war. Dialogue implies equality of nations and equality of people and implies shunning of violence and oppression and adoption of policies based on mutual understanding and respect.

(4) At present, Western Civilisation has over-shadowed all other civilisations in the world. Western countries led by the U.S.A. are the most powerful, economically, politically and militarily, and their materialistic culture is being adopted by the people of all the countries of the world including the Muslim countries.

Muslims (and also the other Eastern people) have got the spiritual message to give to the West. But Muslim countries should come closer to one another on the basis of the essence and the basic humanistic and scientific spirit of Islam. Their mutual differences are mainly pertaining to *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence) or they are of semantic nature. Muslims can come nearer and forge unity on the basis of the spirit of the Qur'an and Hadith and *Sunnah*. Other differences may remain, but it requires tolerance so that these differences of opinion may prove to be a blessing as one Hadith points out. Once the unity among Muslims is forged, they will be in a better position to hold the

dialogue with the Western countries and also with other countries. Muslims should hold the dialogue among themselves and with others on the basis of rationality and wisdom. Arguments sympathetically advanced on the basis of reason and persuasion create understanding which may lead to the solution of the problems. Perfect justice is not possible in this imperfect world, but each party may move half way which may make compromise possible. Just as it is true that without justice, peace is not possible, in the same way, it is also true that some times peace is more important than justice. Peace creates a better atmosphere and a better mood for the dawn of sanity and wisdom, which may make compromise possible, and this may involve some justice to the aggrieved party.

(5) Brother Khatami draws our attention to a disease; almost a plague from which religious societies suffer and the world of Islam at times suffers from it. It is the misconception that Man does not require reason when there is religion and thus they deem faith as an alternative to reason. So, acording to them, faith and reason do not go together. But brother Khatami points out that religion cannot be understood without the help of reason. It is not true that man of faith does not require or use reason while man without faith uses reason. Both require reason and both use it. This is because, a man who believes in religion, whatever he understands his religion to be, it is nothing but his own interpretation of his religious book and interpretation is arrived at with the help of reason. But this use of reason is unconsciously undertaken and so it is better to use it consciously and accept the role of reason even in understanding and following or even in imitation of religion. Also man without faith also has his own unconscious faith or religion as Erich Fromm pointed out in his excellent book *Psycho-Analysis and Religion*. So it is better to have the right religion with the help of the use of sound reason *(Aql-e Saleem)*.

The major difference between man with faith (religion) and a man without faith, in the words of President Khatami, is described below.

'The difference lies in the fact that a man of faith possesses two books while a man without faith, one book. The source of the religious man's knowledge is greater, and thus his achievements are richer. But a man who does not believe in God and inspiration (revelation, intuitive experience) possesses only the Book of Nature, to which he refers with the aid of his reason. A religious man also has this book and, as a natural human being, through the aid of his reason, he studies Nature, acquires knowledge, comprehends science and philosophy, while in addition, he benefits from yet another Book, the Book of Divine Law and Inspiration (revelation). People, who set religion against reason, understand their flawed interpretations to be 'religion'. It is true that inspiration (revelation, intuitive experience or inspiration) lies beyond time and space; however, we exist in time and space. Our understanding, therefore, belongs to the realm of time and space. Thus, our understanding of the Book of creation and Divine Laws (*Deen*) is also limited to time and space. In this way, knowledge evolves. At one time, men of knowledge have one understanding, while at another time, their understanding evolves or perhaps the former understanding is even negated and replaced by our present understanding. Although man is endowed with a divine spirit and it benefits from dimensions that are beyond Nature, beyond time and space, a large portion of his love, feelings and thoughts are nevertheless subject to time and space. Thus a great portion of our understanding of the Book of God is limited to time and space. Those who consider their understanding of God, the Book of God and religion to be indentical with 'religion', with the passage of time, they are still not prepared to change their view. As a result, they sacrifice reason to their own understannding, which is limited to time and space. If we Muslims wish to have a better future and build a prosperous life for ourselves and a model for humanity that is proportional to the Greatness of God and the message of the Prophet, we must rely on God's great blessing — Reason' (*Islam, Dialogue and Civil Society* by Muhammad Khatami, pp. 3-4).

(6) Muslim identity is rooted in the past, because the

Qur'an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the past and we are the believers in the Qur'an, but it does not mean that we regress to the past. But when we seek inspiration from the Qur'an, we go to its essence and thus we go one step backward in order to go two steps forward. Past for us is a spring-board to march ahead into the bright future.

(7) Islam teaches us to accept and adopt any and every good and useful thing that is found anywhere in the world, if there is no *shirk* (i.e. associating partnership with God) involved in it. For seeking knowledge, if one has to go to even China, he should strive to do so, as the saying of Prophet Muhammad says. So in order to mover ahead in the future, we should learn from western civilisation and other civilisations all the good and useful things and their positive achievements. Then alone, we can shape our future with God-like attributes and in which human reason and human rights also are respected.

(8) Khatami stressing the importance of freedom of thought, points out that religion without freedom is equivalent to a life of slavery. Religion should not be juxtaposed against reason and freedom. Religion should be 'a cradle and support for the growth of reason, freedom and liberality. God's religion has taught us this lesson. By relying on these standards and many other factors, we must become prepared for a 'Dialogue among civilisations' and convey to the world the latent grandeur of the foundations of our religion and civilisation'.

The proposal for the Dialogue between civilisations was first mooted by the Islamic Republic of Iran into the 53rd General Assembly of UNO which was welcomed by all and the year 2001 was declared to be the year of Dialogue and understanding among civilisations. The Dialogue is between the East and the West. It is to be the dialogue between the Eastern Civilisation and the Western civilisation, especially between the Western civilisation and Islamic Civilisation.

Voice of Reason and Dialogue from Iran

The East has emphasised the importance of spiritual

or intuitive experience for understanding Truth while the West, since Renaissance, has laid stress on Reason as the instrument for the search of Truth. Reason alongwith experiments helped in understanding relations between things which were then expressed in the form of the Laws of Nature in Physics, Chemistry, Geology, Botany, Zoology and Physiology and Psychology and then Reason aided also in the discovery of laws in social sciences like Economics, Politics, Sociology, Social Psychology, Anthropology, History etc. Natural Sciences helped the Western Man to manipulate Nature, but then he started manipulating and exploiting and oppressing the people of the under-developed countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America by imposing the colonial rule of the Western countries over them. The Westerners tried to derive moral and humane values from reason (here in the sense of Intellect and Intelligence) but they could not succeed.

The great Indian thinker M.N. Roy had come to the conclusion that Man is rational and therefore he would be moral, as man has evolved from the law-governed universe and he is rational, and therefore he would be moral. Thus he tried to derive moral and humane values from man's rationality, though with all my respect to M.N. Roy, I believe that this is arguing in a circle, because Man cannot be rational unless he is moral. The Westerners also failed to derive moral vlues from Intellect and Intelligence (which Khatami calls Reason) and so science without religion led them to exploit Nature and to exploit and oppress other weaker human beings also. For understanding Nature, man and their mutual relationship, Reason (narrowly defined as Intellect and Intelligence) is necessary, but it is not sufficient, and the Westerners thought that it was sufficient even for deriving moral values also, in which they were wrong. So they did not recognise the limitations of intellect and intelligene and they tried to apply it to the spheres where it could not be done so. The Eastern people thought that intuitive experience was sufficient to reach truth, and if the world is imperfect, we should change ourselves and adjust to it. Thus it gave rise to mysticism which though had great contribution to make, but in the world of time and space, it implied running away from hard reality and

thus avoiding sacrifices for changing reality for the betterment of society. Thus in the East, the authority of reason was not accepted by many groups of religious people (barring most of the sufis) though they accepted the limits of intellect. Thus the religion took a dogmatic form, especially in the hands of religious scholars.

Spiritual Experience as the Source of Values and Knowledge — Neglected in the West

In the West, Reason (in the sense of Intellect and Intelligence) was considered supreme and the only source of knowledge. This was another extreme which made their humanism limited to their own near circles and the sense of alienation and loneliness felt by individuals in the dazzling material civilisation increased. The bond of genuine love and sympathy among human beings got weakened and intellect and unrestrained freedom led to gross selfishness of the atomised individuals. This led to break-up of families, frequent divorces between married couples, widespread use of intoxicants, suicides and rapid spread of criminalism and psychic diseases and violence and wars. This was the resut of neglecting the importance of intuitive experiece which alone can impart moral and humane values and not intellect and intelligence (which some thinkers call 'Reason').

Prof. F.A. Hayek's Views on the Relationship Between Religion and Morals

Prof. F.A. Hayek in his famous book *Fatal Conceit* in the 9th chapter entitled 'Religion and the Guardians of Tradition' explains the connection between monotheistic Religion and Man's morals in the following words.

'We owe it partly to mystical and religious beliefs, and, I believe, particularly to the main monotheistic ones, that beneficial traditions have been preserved and transmitted at least long enough to enable those groups following them to grow, and to have the opportunity to spread by natural or cultural selection. This means that, like it or not, we owe the persistence of certain practices, and the civilisation that resulted from them, in part to support from beliefs which are not true — or verifiable or testable — in the

same sense as are scientific statements, and which are certainly not the result of rational argumentation. I sometimes think that it might be appropriate to call at least some of them, at least as a gesture af appreciation, 'symbolic truths', since they did help their adherents to 'be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it' (*Genesis* 1:28). Even those among us, like myself, who are not prepared to accept anthropomorphic conception of personal divinity ought to admit that the premature loss of what we regard as non-factual beliefs would have deprived mankind of a powerful support in the long development of the extended order that we now enjoy, and that even now the loss of these beliefs, whether true or false, creates great difficulties.

'In any case, the religious view that morals were determined by processes incomprehensible to us may at any rate be truer (even if not exactly in the way intended) than the rationalist delusion that Man by exercising his intelligence, invented morals that gave him the power to achieve more than he could ever foresee. If we bear these things in mind, we can better understand and appreciate those clerics who are said to have become somewhat sceptical of the validity of some of their teachings and who yet continued to teach them because they feared that a loss of faith would lead to a decline of morals. No doubt they were right; and even an agnostic ought to concede that we owe our morals, and the tradition that has provided not only our civilisation but our very lives, to the acceptance of such scientifically unacceptable factual claims.

'The undoubted historical connection between religion and the values that have shaped and furthered our civilisation, such as the family and several property, does not of course mean that there is any intrinsic connetion between religion as such and such values. Among the founders of religions over the last two thousand years, many opposed property and the family. But the only religions that have survived are those which support property and family. Thus the outlook for communism which is both anti-property and anti-family (and also anti-religion), is not promising. For it is, I believe, itself a religion which had

its time, and which is now declining rapidly. In communist and socialist countries we are watching how the natural selection of religious beliefs disposes of the maladapted'. (pp. 136-37).

Thus we see that humanitarian values emanate from the spiritual experience of man and not from his intelligence or intellect, but when intelligence, and intellect get combined with one's spiritual experience, it becomes reason and reason is surely required to understand the true meaning of religion and to comprehend the true nature of the scientific method.

Now in the field of religion, as reason was banished, the instrument to separate the spirit of religion from its external forms, in the form of social laws and social structures, was lost and hence the real religion got hidden under the cover of external rituals and some beliefs and practices dogmatically adhered to. This has happened with every religion including Islam. So people who talk about the limitations of Reason in understanding Truth, they should first accept the authority of Reason and the great importance of it in the search of Truth *(Haqq)*. If one gives up Reason, he can understand neither religion nor science.

I personally believe that once Reason is given up, one loses self-autonomy and then man becomes free to derive peace, or violence, terrorism or brotherhood, justice or cruelty and good thing or bad thing to which his unrestrained emotions lead, so I do not define reason as most of the philosophers have defined uptil now and Khatami following them, uses the word 'reason' in the same sense of intellect and intelligence. The function of Intelligence is to show the relationship between two or more things and Intellect is the power to name the things on the basis of similarity found among them and abstractly conceived. Bertrand Russell has pointed out that it is not the function of Intellect to generate emotion and thus intellect is neutral to emotions. Intellect and Intelligence are incapable of transforming a bad man into a good man. But it is one's intuitive experience which is beyond time and space and which is experienced in the depth of one's pure original self which can change

the bad man into a good man. Man is created on *Ahsan-i Taqweem* by God so that man gets or imbibes moral and humane values of freedom, equality, brotherhood, sympathy and sense of justice. When intellect and intelligence get combined with this intuitive experience, it then takes the form of Reason and the Qur'an appeals to this kind of Reason on its every page for understanding *Haqq* (Truth) which sufis call *Aql-e saleem* which gives rise to *M'arefat, Irfan*, which is wisdom—*Hikmat* or true knowledge and that is why Socrates described (such) knowledge as Virtue. This is my humble formulation of the concept of Reason in order to combat the authoritarianism and monopolistic attitude which parades in the name of religion. But the gist of what I say is the same as that of Khatami and Qadhdhafi. Khatami shows that in the world of science, relationships between objects are discovered, but there is no direct conversation between parties.

God Addresses Inner Self of Man

In dialogue, there is conversation, there is speaking, addressing somebody and there is listening. In religious or spiritual experience, man's deeper inner self is addressed by God which helps him to transcend Nature, and so he or she gets the moral or Godly values of justice, freedom, equality, tolerance and brotherhood.

Let me quote Khatami in this respect.

'The world of science is not the world of speeches and addresses — science is a conscious effort to discover the relationships of objects, and for this reason, scientific discourse does not transcend the level of man's self-consciousness. But the world of Art and the world of Religion are the world of addressing. That is why the languages of mysticism and religion are linked together by genuine and profound ties.

'Man is addressed again and again in the Bible and in the Holy Qur'an and it is with this call that the individual human being is elevated and becomes a person.

'When man is being addressed by God on a general and universal level, and not in specific terms of religious

teaching and codes of conduct, none of his psychological, social or historical aspects are really being addressed. What is addressed is man's true non-historic and individual nature of his true self and that is why all the divine religions are not quintessentially different. The differences arise from religious laws and codes of conduct that govern the social and judicial life of human beings. Man's originality does not emanate from his individuality or his collectivity. His originality is solely due to the fact that it is him, and him alone, who is addressed by the Divine call. With this address, man's soul transcends its boundaries, and with the transcendence of his soul, his world also becomes a world of justice and humanity" (*Islam, Dialogue and Civil society* pp. 8-9).

Under the impact of Islamic civilisation and values of Islamic culture, Europeans studied Greek culture and under the influence of both the cultures, they revitalised religion by giving it new language and imparting fresh ideas in the changed world. Renaissance thus was not against religion, but it was 'actually a religious event aimed at conserving, reforming and propagating religion and not opposed to it or against it' (p. 10).

Going Back in Order to Go Forward

In the same way, Khatami insists that we should study different aspects of past Islamic civilisation. Then we should also study the basic values and thoughts on the basis of which the structure of the peresent western civilisation is erected. Their science, their technology, their philosophy, their economics, politics, sociology and other social sciences also should be studied by us. Then Muslims will become the meeting-ground of the East and the West and Spiritualism and Reason. As Europeans looked to the past i.e. Greek culture and Roman civilisation and also studied prevailing Islamic civilisation of that time and getting fully equipped in this way, they developed the movement of Renaissance and Reformation, we also should study our past in order to grasp the basic values and spirit of Islam, study also the present Western Civilisation and adopt all healthy and progressive things it has given rise to and mould our future

and create a more healthy, prosperous, peaceful and balanced civil society on the basis of this integrated knowledge. Second important thing to which Khatami draws our attention is that if dialogue between the East and the West is to succeed, then the East and West — both should participate on the level of equality and respect for each other.

In this process of Dialogue at the international level, the question of the relation of politics with Ethics arises. Khatami exhorts:

'A basic change in political ethics is required for the realisation of this proposl (of the Dialogue).

'Modesty, commitment and involvement are three important requisites for the crystallisation of the proposal in the domains of politics and international relations" (p. 30).

The most difficult question is about secular morality and dogmatic religion. One lacks God and the other one lacks the unity and uniqueness of the self of God and His Attributes and indulges in *Shirk* and *Nifaq*. Both lack the foundation of the Absolute that is Unique and Transcendental. Second is more dangerous, because it deceives in the name of religion.

Since Khatami has discussed this point excellently and so I cannot resist the temptation of quoting him at length with some interspaces.

He writes:

'A Godless life, especially without the monotheistic religions and the God of Muslim mysticism or *Irfan* — which is different from the God of the superstitious or even the God for philosophers is dark and narrow. But this (God of monotheistic religions) is a God that is at the peak of nobility and grandeur. With all their limitations and inability, humans can make direct contact with this God and establish a sincere, emotional and linguistic relationship with him.'

For creating a society of such broad-minded people, a host of religious intellectuals are required. But he points out that our society suffers from two woes — secular

intellectualism and unenlightened religious dogma.

In his own words:

'Unfortunately what has been called intellectualism in our society has been a movement that has been superficial and cut off from the people. Never has the voice of self-appointed intellectuals travelled beyond the cafeterias and coffee houses where they have posed as a political opposition. Even if people have heard their voice, they have found it incomprehensible. Thus, there has never been any mutual understanding.

'The other main problem we face is the parochialism and regressive visions of dogmatic believers. Religious dogma is nothing more than ascribing sanctity and eternity to limited and incomplete human interpretations, and giving priority to emotions over rationality and realistic appraisal. They want a return to Islamic civilisation. We must alert such people that their wishes are anachronistic. The specific thoughts that underpinned Islamic civilisation ended with the passing of that civilisation. If it had maintained its dynamism, relevance and ability to provide answers to people's problems, that civilisation would have endured.

'Dogma presents the most formidable obstacle to institutionalising a system that wishes to provide model for the present and future of human life, a system based on a more powerful logic than competing schools and ideologies. I hope that through our revolution and a well-conceived connecting religious seminaries and the main centres of thinking in today's world, meaning universities — we will witness the emergence of the religious intellectuals. This is a scenario that has neither the deficiencies of secular intellectualism nor those of dogmatic religious belief." Thus in all fairness, religious belief is rooted in the depths of the human soul. And according to the Holy Qur'an, the human constitution is religious and monotheistic. The essence of religion is holy and transcendent, and if we extricate these two qualities, we will not have religion anymore. And anywhere there is holiness and transcendence, there is also absoluteness. Here I want to touch on one of the biggest afflictions that threaten the religious life of people.

'The human heart is in touch with the divine and the transcendent and whenever the human conscience achieves union with this spirit, this is itself a signal that the essence of humanity is in touch with that transcendent reality which has been referred as the spirit of God. But human existence has two facets: natural and godly. Humans have their heads in the sky, but their feet on the ground, predestined to live on this planet. And because they live on this planet, their lives and minds are in constant flux, reflecting the dynamic nature of this world. Because they are natural beings, they are unsettled. Humans are circumscribed by time and space and thus their thinking is relative and fallible, affected by history and hence dynamic. Neither the body nor the mind remains constant. Our knowledge is relative and constantly in flux. There is no escaping the relativity of our beliefs and knowledge, and humans have no choice but to carry on with this uncertainty and put their knowledge and skills to the test of trial and error and to modify them. All the diversity among different traditions, views and religions and even among the sects of the same religions is proof that no one can claim to understand all reality from all angles. Today, irrespective of creed, we differ from our parents in thought and deed.

'One of the main difficulties of the community of believers is that, on the one hand, they take some realities to be absolute, transcendent and holy, and on the other hand, since they are themselves relative, they see all this through the prism of their relativity of their own minds and bodies. The more acute malaise of believers appears when the absoluteness and holiness of religion affects the time and space-bound and fallible human interpretations of religion, such that the prescriptions of a few may come to be viewed as religiosity itself. A believer is seen only as someone who subscribes to this specific view. Many frictions have their roots here'. (p. 47)

Many of the Western philosophers either do not accept the existence of such Absolute Reality like God or they think that it is impossible to comprehend such reality even if it exists. So, at least in social life, such a possible reality can be neglected. According to Khatami, the safest way

to understand God is through the heart, through direct experience of him and not through Intellect. He writes: 'Leaders (scholars) of Islam have suggested that the way to reach the Absolute is worship, not extrapolating from the known to the unknown. As said in the Qur'an, the way of the absolute and enlightenment is worship, and good conduct and the cleansing of the inside, meaning that the preferred way to know God is direct experiential contact, not understanding. Of course, this in no way denies the importance of philosophical and scientific intellect especially in Islam which emphasises their important role. But it is important to recognise the limitations of intellect, and the true believer must travel the path of the heart. The truth of religious belief is an experience, not a thought, an experience based on self-development, controlling earthly desires and resignation before the grandeur of existence and enchantment by the loved one. If this path is travelled, humans will reach God. Understanding is an intellectual endeavour where through known concepts, one can reach the unknown and corresponding to the position of the person in space and time, the intellect is relative'. (pp. 48-49)

He further adds:

"Serving religion in this age requires that we courageously distinguish between the essence of religion and incomplete interpretations of humans such that religion maintains its central place deep in the hearts of believers, in a way that we can modify religious thinking to adapt to the demands of our time'. (p. 50)

Scientific Experience and Spiritual Experience — Two Sources of Knowledge

As I have tried to show in other chapters of the book that just as intellect accepts scientific experience (acquired through experiments and observation) as data and develops concepts on the basis of it, in the same way, the religious experience or the spiritual experience of the Absolute i.e. God also should be accepted or is accepted as data and it also has got a cognitive element or aspect as scientific

experience has got. The Qur'an has made a distinction between *Alam-e Khalq* and *Alam-e Amr*. The soul of Man is in the *Alam-e Amr* and the Qur'an says that Man has been given very little knowledge of *Alam-e Amr*. Arts, poetry and mysticism or sufism come in the sphere of *Alam-e Amr*, so I humbly submit that it is not true to say that understanding is based on intellect, and religion is based on experience, and intellect and understanding are alternative to religious experience. As, religious experience has got a cognitive element, we require the help of intellect to categorise our religious experience and then the combination of intellect and religious experience takes the form or reason to which the Qur'an appeals on almost every page. So reason gives *Irfan, M'arefat*. Only pure intellect is not reason. Pure intellect is neutral, but when combined with spiritual experience, it becomes Reason which Sufis called *Aql-e Saleem* and Qur'an also described it in the same way and in the same sense. This *Aql-e Saleem* gives some knowledge though imperfect knowledge about our soul, God and life after death.

Secondly, though sufism provided some kind of escape from surrounding hard reality, but still, however, its greatest contribution was their emphasis on the need for having spiritual experience, the experience of the absolute, because belief in God without such intuitive experience (which is super-normal) of God, becomes an imposition from without. So *Ebadat* (worship) of God is meant to impart this kind of God's experience. The Qur'an is a revelatory experience of Prophet Muhammad and the Qur'an appeals Man to have this kind of inner spiritual experience, though may be of a lower degree, so that he (or she) gets wisdom and maturity to get knowledge of God and human soul, and he gets strengthened to follow justice and adhere to the values of freedom, equality and brotherhood. Otherwise, on the basis of Prophet's revelatory experience i.e. on the basis of the Qur'an and also on the basis of Hadith and *Sunnah*, some religious scholars may impose their own particular interpretations of the verses of Qur'an and sayings of Prophet Muhammad, on the people in the society. They get the power to decide who is the true Muslim and who

is not. So they take the place of God. In reality, it is only the prerogative of God to say who is a true or good Muslim and who is not so and that also he will decide or announce it on the Day of Judgement *(Qayamat).*

Whoever says that he or she is a Muslim should be accepted to be so. Any other definition of a Muslim will give monopoly to so-called specialists in religion. Belief is not external utterance, but inner conviction arrived at through reason i.e. through intellect and spiritual experience. Goodness or sincerity as a Muslim lies within and only God knows what lies within Man. One's speech or external behaviour does not provide any ground to declare him or her to be true or not true Muslim.

Thirdly, moral and humanitarian values that result from spiritual experience of God, those values have entered in the modern social sciences like economics, politics, sociology; and economic policies, political policies and social approaches are framed on the basis of the insights acquired through the theoretical knowledge of these sciences. As for example, in economics, there is the detailed discussion about the formulation of fiscal policy, monetary policy, commercial policy etc. so that poverty and unemployment can be lessened and the standard of living of the people can be improved. Medical sciences, psychoanalysis, psychiatry are theoretical as well as practical sciences to cure, and also prevent physiological diseases and psychic ailments. The modern social security system also is the result of the application of humanitarian values. So the main function of Religion is to change Man from within so that he or she becomes a good and noble person and he or she gets spiritual capacity, mental stamina and readiness to sacrifice one's own life and property for the sake of Truth and for running a movement for the welfare of common masses and down-trodden people in co-operation with other good and sincere non-Muslims.

For creating a society of such broad-minded people, a host of religious intellectuals are required. But he points out that our society suffers from two woes — secular intellectualism and unenlightened religious dogma.

In his own words again:

'Unfortunately what has been called intellectualism in our society has been a movement that has been superficial and cut off from the people. Never has the voice of self-appointed intellectuals travelled beyond the cafeterias and coffee houses where they have posed as a political opposition. Even if people have heard their voice, they have found it incomprehensible. Thus, there has never been any mutual understanding.

'The other main problem we face is the parochialism and regressive visions of dogmatic believers. Religious dogma is nothing more than ascribing sanctity and eternity to limited and incomplete human interpretations, and giving priority to emotions over rationality and realistic appraisal.

'Dogma presents the most formidable obstacle to institutionalising a system that wishes to provide model for the present and future of human life, a system based on a more powerful logic than competing schools and ideologies. I hope that through our revolution and a well-conceived connection between these two spheres — by connecting religious seminaries and the main centers of thinking in today's world, meaning universities — we will witness the emergence of the religious intellectuals. This is a scenario that has neither the deficiencies of secular intellectualism nor those of dogmatic religious belief'.

12

Conclusions

1. If the democratic and non-authoritarian approach is adopted and if the subject-matter and Scope of Science, Religion and Philosophy are properly defined, all the three subjects are found to be complementary to one another. This becomes clear when we study the methodology adopted in the Qur'an for man's search and realisation of Truth *(Haqq)*.
2. The religion of Nature or the Natural Religion (which is called Islam in the Qur'an and Hadith) is there within the heart of every human being and so the function of the prophet is to draw our attention to what is already there within everyone of us.
3. Religion is termed as 'Deen' *(Dharma)* by the Qur'an. But *Sharia* embodies different external forms through which basic Religion is expressed in accordance with the limitations of time and space. So *Sharia* has been changing and must continue to change keeping the basic principles of *Deen* (Religion) at the centre of *Sharia*. If the *Sharia* ceases to change, Religion becomes lifeless and formal. Ever fresh glory and liveliness of *Deen* require *Sharia* to change in the light of the basic principles of *Deen*.
4. Opposition of the Qur'an to idol-worship is, in fact, opposition to the authoritarian and monopolistic attitude

which becomes a bar to search for truth and to self-realisation and God-realisation.

5. Every piece of Knowledge is based on experience and intellect and then it appears in the form of Knowledge. There are different levels and different types of experience. What we call scientific experience and spiritual experience — both the ones, should be brought in the field of philosophy so that the possible elements of impurities found in experience, can be weeded out and we can get pure experience, which can give us pure knowledge about different aspects and essence of Reality. This knowledge leads to true understanding and self-realisation and God-Realisation.

6. Intelligence, Intellect and Reason are different from one another. Intelligence is possessed by men as well as animals. Intellect is possessed only by human beings. All human beings are also potentially capable of having intuitive experience which has an element of revelation from God. Thus Reason consists of Intellect and Intuition both combined together. Also all types of revelatory experience are not qualitatively different from one another, as Iqbal also points out, though there may be a difference in the degree of their levels. Thus Revelation is not a separate source of knowledge from Reason. Revelation (or Intuition) is expressed through Reason and thus Reason includes Revelation and hence Revelation has to be judged on the basis of Reason. That is not going against Revelation. That is actually the method and approach that the Qur'an has followed.

7. The roots of Sufism are there in the Qur'an. Every truly good person is, to that extent, a Sufi. Sufism emphasises the purity of heart without which search for Truth is not possible. Psychic balance and moral integrity are inter-related and without psychic balance and moral integrity, true happiness and true search for Truth and self-realisation and God-realisation are not possible.

8. In the past, Muslims have contributed a great deal to the development of world civilisation in the direction of the embodiment of the values of freedom, humanism,

brotherhood of Man, democracy and respect for the individual, secularism, equal fundamental rights of the individual, social justice and non-authoritarianism and scientific attitude. This was the result of the teachings of the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad. But many of the Muslims and also non-Muslims are not fully aware of it and have forgotten this Glorious Heritage.

9. Then Muammer al-Qadhdhafi's Third Universal Theory, which strongly advocates the expansion of political, economic, social and religious freedoms of the common people, has been summarised, and its source, guidance and inspiration from the Qur'an, has been highlighted.
10. The lectures of Seyyed Mohammad Khatami — the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran on 'Islam, Dialogue and Civil Society' published in 2003 by the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, have been surveyed here. These lectures emphasise the importance of the freedom of thought, Reason, Dialogue, Equality and Peace.

True Islam has been actually kept in prison by dogmatic people and it is now time to bring it out of this prison so that it can again play its historic role to lead mankind to Freedom, Brotherhood, Equality, Peace and Happiness for all, irrespective of their caste, creed, religion, community, nation, race, colour or sex.

Bibliography

AMEER ALI, *The Spirit of Islam*, Calcutta, 1902.

Ambedkar B.R. *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar—Writings & Speeches*, Vol. 3, 1987.

ARBERRY, A.J. Sufism, London, 1950.

ATHER SAIYID & RIZVE ABBAS, *A History of Sufism in India*, 2 Vols., New Delhi 1983.

AZAD, A.K., *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* (Vol. I), Bombay, 1962.

ASAD, MOHAMMAD, *The Road to Mecca*, New York, 1954.

AZIZ AHMAD, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan*, Bombay, 1967.

BOER, T.J. De. *The History of Philosophy in Islam*, New York, 1967.

BROHI, A.K. *Islam in the Modern World*, Lahore.

CARREL, A., *Man the Unknown*, Bombay, 1959.

CRAGG. KENNETH, *The Event of the Qur'an*, London, 1971.

DOI. I. ABDUR RAHMAN, *Shriah—The Islamic Law*, London, 1984.

AL-FARABI, *Kitab al-Huruf*, Beirut.

FARIDDUDDIN ATTAR, Tadhkerat al-Awliya.

FROMM, E., *The Fear of Freedom*, London, 1960.

FROMM, E., *Man for Himself*, London, 1950.

FROMM, E., *The Sane Society*, N.V., 1955.

FROMM, E., *Psycho-Analysis and Religion*, 14ed., The Colonial Press Inc., Clinton, Massachussetts, July 1964.

FYSEE, A.A.A., *A Modern Approach to Islam*, Bombay, 1963.

GHAZALI, ABDUL HAMID, *Book of Knowledge* (Translated into English), New Delhi, 1963.

AL-GHAZALI, *Tahafut al-Falasifa*, Beirut.

GIBB H.A.R. and Bowem H. (Ed.), *Islamic Society and the West*, London, 1950.

GIBB H.A.R., *Modern Trends in Islam*, Chicago, 1947.

GILANI, RIYAZ al-HASAN, *The Reconstruction of Legal Thought in Islam*, Delhi, 1982.

HAKIM, K.A., *The Islamic Ideology*, Lahore, 1961.

HITTI, P.K., *History of the Arabs*, London, 1956.

HOURANI GEORGE F., *Averroes on the Harmony of Religion and Philosophy*, London.

ALI, IQBAL, *Islamic Sufism*, Delhi, 1979.

IQBAL, AFZAL, *Islamisation of Pakistan*, Delhi, 1984.

IQBAL, MUHAMMED. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Lahore, 1971.

JALBANI, S.N. *Teachings of Shah Waliullah*, Lahore, 1967.

JAMES, W., *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, N.V., 1902.

JAMI, *Nafahatul Uns*, Calcutta.

JOAD, C.E.M., *Guide to the Philosophy of Morals and Politics*, London,1938.

JUNG, C.G., *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, London, 1961.

KHUDA BAKHSH, S. and D.S. MARGOLIOUTH, *The Renaissance of Islam*, New Delhi, 1937.

AL-KINDI, *Rasail al-Kindi al-Falsafiyya*, Cairo.

LEWIS, BERNARD, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe*, New York, 1982.

The Origins of Ismailism, Cambridge, 1940.

The Emergence of Modern Turkey, London, 1968.

Islam in History, London, 1973.

LOKHANDWALA S.T. (ed.) *India and Contemporary Islam*, Simla, 1971.

MAHMOUD AYOUB, *Islam and the Third Universal Theory The Religious Thought of Muammar al-Qadhdhafi*, 1987.

MAHMOOD TAHIR, *Personal Law in Islamic Countries*, New Delhi, 1987.

MALIK, HAFEEZ, Iqbal, New York, 1971.

MAWDUDI, A.A., *Towards Understanding Islam*, Delhi, 1940.

MENNINGER, K., *Man Against Himself*, Harvard, 1971.

MUHAMMAD, ALI, *The Religion of Islam*, Lahore, 1950.

MUJADDID AHMAD SIRHINDI, *Letters*.

MUJEEB, M., *The Indian Muslifs*, London 1967.

MUJEEB, MUHAMMED, *From Jinnah to Zia*, Lahore, 1979.

NADWI, ABUL HASAN ALI, *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Lucknow, 1955.

NASR, S.H. *Science and Civilisation in Islam*, New York, 1970.

Three Muslim Sages — Avicenna, Suhrawardi, Ibn 'Arabi, Cambridge, 1964.

The Traditional Islam in the Modern World, London 1987.

NICHOLSON, R.A. *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, Cambridge, 1921.

PATTISON PRINGLE, *The Philosophy of Religion*, Oxford.

QADRI, ANWAR A., *Justice in Historical Islam*, New Delhi, 1982.

RADHAKRISHNAN, *Recovery of Faith*, London, 1963.

RAHMAN, FAZLUR, *Islam And Modernity*, London, 1982. Islam, London, 1966.

RAJAEEE, FARHANG, *Islamic Values and World View*, London, 1983.

Al-RAZI ABU BAKR, *Rasail Falsafiyya*.

Al-RAZI FAKHRUDDIN, *Nihayat al-Ijaz*, Cairo.

RIDA, MUHAMMAD RASHID, *The Revolution of Muhammad*, Bomay, 1960.

RODINSON, MAKIME, *Islam and Capitalism* (translated into the English by Brian Pearce), *Studia Secitica*, 2 Vols., Cambridge, 1971.

ROY M.N., *The Historical Role of Islam*, Vora & Co. Publishers Ltd., Bombay, 1937.

RUMI, JALALUDDIN, Mathnawi.

RUMI, JALAL al-DIN, *Discourses of Rumi* (translated by A.J. ARBERY), LONDON, 1961.

IBN RUSHD, *Talkhis Kitab al-Nafs*, Cairo.

IBN RUSHD, *Talkhis Mantiq Aristu*, Beirut.

SARDAR, ZIAUDDIN, *The Future of Muslim Civilisation*, London, 1970.

SAYYID, QUTB, *Islam — The Misunderstood Religion*, Delhi, 1968.

AL-SHAIKH ABDUL KADAR JILANI, Fathur Rabbani — Sermons.

SIDDIQI, M.N., *Muslim Economic Thinking*, Leicester, n.d.

SIDDIQI, S.A., *Public Finance in Islam*, Delhi, 1982.

SIMON VAN DEN BERGH, Averroes' *Tahaful al-Tahaful*, London.

IBN SINA, Al-Nijat, Cairo.

IBN SINA, *Kitab al-Isharat Wa al-Tanbihat*.

IBN SINA, *Tabiiyat-i Alai* Tehran.

SAYYED MOHAMMAD KHATAMI: *Dialogue and Civil Society*, Published by JNU, New Delhi, 2003.

SMITH e.d. TURKEY, *Origins of the Kemalist Movement and Government of the Grand National Assembly*, 1991, Washington, 1959.

SMITH, W.C., *Modern Islam in Modern History*, Princeton, 1960.

TAGORE, R., *Religion of Man*, London, 1931.

TANFIC IBRAHIM and ARTHUR SAGDEEV, *Classical Islamic Philosophy*, Arnold Publishers, New Delhi, 1992.

WHITTEHEAD, A.N., *Science and the modern world*, N.Y., 1954.

ZUHURUDDIN AHMAD M.M., Mystic Tendencies in Islam, First Published in 1932—Reprinted in 1993 by Low Price Publications, Delhi.

Index

H

I

R

S

T

U

V

W

Y

Z

In this book, the author has tried to provide a synthesis of Science, Philosophy and Religion with the help of the teachings of Quran and Hadith. He has made a distinction between Deen (Religion) and Shariah and showed that Deen is within man and so it does not change, because every human being is born on this nature (fitrat). But Shariah (Social political, economic and commercial laws, and not modes of worship) may change with the change of time and clime so that the real spirit of Deen (Religion) which is the spirit of God may live and shine forth in its true glory in human deeds.

He has made a distinction between Intelligence, Intellect and Reason and has shown that Reason consists of Intelligence, Intellect and spiritual experience (intuition) and Quran appeals to Reason for understanding the signs of God in His creation and for deriving ethical values.

He has emphasized the importance of Islamic sufisim in the crisis-torn modern world. He has explained the sufistic theories of Wahdatul Wujud, Wahdatu shshohud and Wahdat al Takhliq.

He has given quotations from the books of Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Pringle Pettision, Erich Fromm and M.N. Roy etc. in support of the validity of his thesis.

There are two important separate chapters on Muammar al-Qaddafi's liberal and true interpretation of Islam and Mr. Mohammed Khatami—the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran's progressive interpretation of Islam. These two chapters are very important and they show that the Muslim leaders are strong believers in peace, social justice, human brotherhood and freedom of the individuals and they are believers in social change through democratic and peaceful means.

Rs. 500

Other titles of related interest

1. *Dr. Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi*
   The Attitude of Islam Towards Science and Philosophy
2. *Dr. Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi*
   World Religions and Islam (2 Volumes)
3. *N. Hanif*
   Biographical Encyclopaedia of Sufis (South Asia)
4. *N. Hanif*
   Biographical Encyclopaedia of Sufis (Central Asia and Middle East)
5. *N. Hanif*
   Biographical Encyclopaedia of Sufis (Africa & Europe)
6. *N. Hanif*
   Islamic Concept of Crime and Justice (2 Volumes)
7. *Dr. Hamid Naseem*
   Muslim Philosophy Science and Mysticism
8. *Dr. Hamid Naseem*
   Emerging From Darkness : Ghazzali's Impact on the Western Philosophers

PUBLISHERS

4740/23, ANSARI ROAD, DARYA GANJ, NEW DELHI-110002

PHONES: 23281029, 23244664, 51010989
FAX: 011-23277098
e-mail: sarupandsonsin@hotmail.com

ISBN 81-7625-476-2